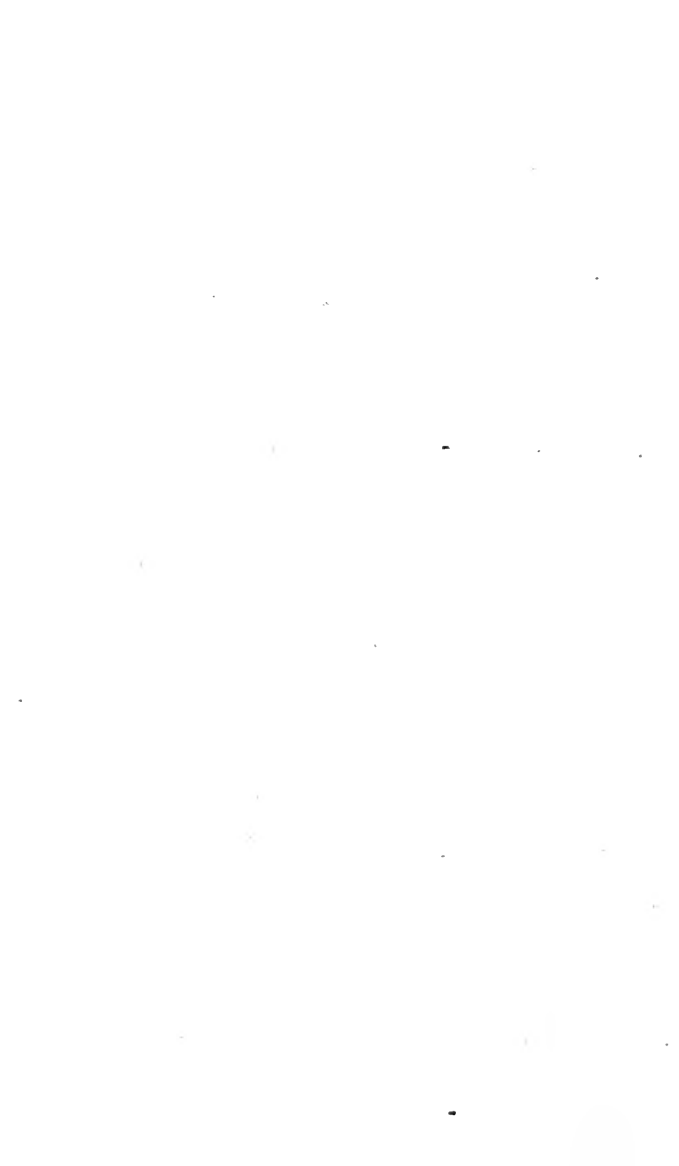




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THE
LITTLE FOLKS OF REDBOW.

BY
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"OUT OF PRISON," &c.

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THE LITTLE FOLKS OF REDBOW.

CHAPTER I.

SHOP.

"Cottons and cambrics all farewell,
And muslins too adieu."

"**I**T do remind me of my own country so much, miss," said Barton, wiping a stray tear that had found its way down the rosy outline of her cheek, as the chimes of the dainty little church near by rang merrily to and fro on their musical errand.

How the sound rang out on the clear frosty air! Up the gamut and down again, now clanging a sweet monotony of thirds, and anon

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breaking out into "Mear," or "Dundee," or some other blessed old-time tune.

The sun shone brightly in the wintry sky. Sleigh bells tinkled from the street below. A long vista of muffled up pedestrians was visible from the nursery windows, their cheeks bitten scarlet by the sharp, clear air. Pretty St. Mary's crowned the view. Its shining windows and glistening brown stone portals, its spire so stately and tapering, where in the bell tower red lights gleamed on Christmas nights, were all pictures of beauty to the Winfield children, in whose nursery sat Mistress Barton, listening to the chimes.

"It's like 'Bow Bells' at home, miss, and the churches in the Strand. There's many bells in London, dear, and they're always ringing. It gives me a sort of a lonesomeness sometimes, miss, to hear them, for one can't help remembering the places they've been happy in."

"I hope you may be happy with us, nurse," said Kate Winfield, gently. "Charley is a

dear baby, and mamma"—she paused a moment, her red lips looking ready to break out into smiles, while a lovely light suffused her face—"well, she is just mamma, you know. You can't help loving her dearly; everybody does;" and having given vent to this fine little outburst of loving praise, Kate settled down to her book again.

The sweet bells chimed on. A warm glow of soft red light filled the nursery. It was a large room, extending the whole length of the house. A carpet of richest hues and small mixed figures covered the floor, so bright and warm it was, that it seemed of itself almost sufficient furnishing.

Nurse Barton rose, rolled up her knitting, and went out at the same moment that Fanny, the second sister, entered, and following her, Cad, the youngest of the trio. Fanny walked up to the window. Cad established herself in her favorite fashion.

"Kate, can't you open shop?" asked Fanny. "I'm dreadfully shabby in my morning gowns.

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I must have a dress, and I'm going to choose green this time, with orange trimmings."

"Shop is not to be opened again this month," Kate answered, without raising her eyes from her book. "Mother said so. Besides. I don't really think you need a new dress."

"Indeed, I do," persisted Fanny; "you know I wear out my clothes faster than any of you; perhaps it's my irritable disposition pricking outside; any way, I'm shabby. I say it's wrong of mamma to shut up shop. I mean to coax her; the shop is full. What's the use of having things if you don't use them? I've torn the ruffle off my blue, almost half-way round—and——"

"Mend it," said Kate.

"I can't, it's such a queerness of a tear—just over the hem. And, besides, I want a green with an orange stripe."

"Yellow and green!"

A mellow, laughing voice this, the property of a merry little girl, seated in the middle of

the room on a heap of scarlet cushions. She made a lovely picture as the wintry sun lighted up her pretty, trim little figure, fair-flowing hair, and dainty dress.

"What an odd one our Fan is," she added, another musical laugh rippling from her rosy lips.

"And what if I am odd?" Fanny responded sharply, her cheeks reddening. "I'm able to be, I hope. I'll have what I want, and say what I wish, I guess, whether other folks approve or not. I'm not little Miss Plausible, like you, or Propriety, like Kate. You are always saying something to aggravate me, you two. I'll have green and yellow, or black and blue, if I like;" and a few tears, born of her hot temper, stood in her eyes.

Kate was now roused sufficiently to put her book aside. Her sweeter nature made her capable of arbitration in these small household quarrels.

"Now, Fanny, you're in a passion," she said, coming forward all the length of a sunbeam.

"Cad, you *do* say cross things, dear; what's the harm of green and yellow, don't buttercups grow close to clover leaves?"

Fanny still stood, pouting. Cad was looking at her with an amused, provoking smile.

"Did you *ever* see such a temper?" queried the small mother of many dolls, putting the last stitch in a tiny blue sack.

"Ugly, hateful, provoking thing!" muttered Fanny. "You and Phil are always trying to break my heart. I wonder what boys were made for—or younger sisters, either? I wonder—O!——"

She sprang forward, the red flag of anger disappearing, dashed across the room, and held out her arms as Barton came in, arrayed in a prim little English cap and a dainty apron. Barton carried Prince Charlie.

You can't fancy what Charlie was like, unless you have just such an angel in your own household. In the first place, as Fanny enthusiastically said, and no one gainsaid her, Charlie was a "perfect beauty." The grand,

princely little head, with its wealth of silken curls, the milk-white forehead, shy, wondering brown eyes, moods of sudden mirth or seriousness, glances that challenged the soul's truth, dimples, coaxing kisses, haughty little nods, as saying, "You have my royal permission to go on;" unexpected quivering of coral lips, caressing fingers, worldless disdains, amateur concessions, everything lovely and winning, adorable and wonderful, that makes up the regal individuality of a baby, little Charlie was.

It was not surprising, therefore, that Fanny held out her arms, from which the fetters of selfishness fell without noise; no wonder that ill-temper vanished from her brow, and left her eyes shining, as the little fellow turned from his new nurse with a smile.

"It's my turn to hold him to-day, nurse," cried Fanny. "Kate had him yesterday and Cad the day before. Come, prince out of fairy land, most beautiful of baby brothers."

"Now, miss," said prosaic Barton, "is your hands quite clean?"

Fanny drew indignantly back. If looks were swords, nurse would have been sorely hurt.

"I should *hope* I was old enough to keep my hands clean always," she exclaimed, with vehement emphasis. "I wonder what you think of us?"

"Lawk, miss!" ejaculated Barton, and stood there red and sheepish. "You see they was untidy in the last place to that degree 'twas hard work to find a clean spot on 'em. I des-say it's all right, miss, so don't be out o' temper with me."

"I'm not out of temper," muttered Fanny, still resentful, as finally she took Charlie in her arms.

"*We* don't call it out of temper; it isn't polite," sad Cad, soberly; "it isn't *out* of any thing—it's only *in* tantrums. Besides, we are *very* particular to keep ourselves spick-spandy clean; mamma don't allow any dirt round; does she, Petkin?"

Petkin was the doll whom long usage and a much enduring China face, proof against all

accidents and repeated washings, had endeared to her young mother, and on whom she was trying the pretty blue sack just completed. Her world in miniature was a happy world to this busy, loving little heart. Cad was the incarnation of capable motherhood. She had so many babies, that, like the old woman that lived in a shoe, she was sorely perplexed sometimes where to bestow them.

Her favorites were easily numbered, however. Chief of these was Petkin, a gift from a friend in the far South, who bore her scrub-bings or kisses with the same serene and smiling countenance. Magnificent Maud came next. She had first seen the light in a showy London bazar. Sordid calico was quite unknown to this fastidious young creature, whose silk dress shone with silver lace and spangles. Miss Maud did duty on exhibition. Cad never tired of admiring her long pale hair, brightened by a top-knot of delicate rose pink ribbon, that formed a pretty contrast to the flaxen curls; her exquisite idle hands, in one of which

dangled a tiny handkerchief of real Honiton, thus proving her title to fine ladyship.

When this favorite had just begun to pall a little on Cad's honest liking, came French Felice, a present from an uncle travelling abroad. It had been sent directly from Paris, with the letter that follows, cunningly folded in its well-gloved little hand:

*"My Dear Little Cad—*If you were only with your old uncle, he would take you through some of these Paris shops, where miracles of ingenuity are for sale.

"I wish I could show you this beautiful rose, a marvel of coloring and delicacy. While admiring it, as I am sure you would, suddenly you would find in your hand a unique little smelling bottle; yet nobody would question that you held a rose, and a freshly cut one too. Here are verbenas of such dewy freshness that you can hardly persuade yourself they are not real. I would put on your hand a spider with diamond eyes all over its little

body; it is even made to crawl; but I think I shall not buy it for a brooch for my little lady. Here is a gold thimble that, on the pressure of a concealed spring, sends out a tiny fountain of perfumed water. Here is a fan that can be transformed into a parasol. Butterflies and black beetles are gifted with the power of locomotion; and how do you like Felice? She opens and shuts her eyes, smiles comically, and comes not empty handed to her future mamma. Good-by, excellent little house-keeper, and don't forget *UNCLE JACK.*"

Felice came, accompanied by a superb wardrobe. Morning robes, beautiful enough to set many a human belle wondering—fine French dressing gowns, complete dresses of moire silk, with ridiculously long trains, and numberless other vanities, conspicuous among which were two pairs of gaiter boots, perfect in make and finish, a pink parasol, daintily lined and fringed, a set of ermine furs, and a gold watch, and bracelets.

What wonder that sober little Cad grew wild with joy when these beautiful presents arrived? It was quite enough to turn her head for the time, as similar vanities bewilder older and wiser people than she. Her little heart was bound up in dolls—always had been.

Cad had just crossed the boundary of her ninth year, and she was small of her age. From her infancy she had been easy to manage. Her heart was always large and loving, and her natural disposition good. Her sister Fanny was eleven, and fancied herself quite a woman. Her reign was by no means a quiet one; she made fewer friends than Cad, and was easily thrown off her balance. People were always afraid of "putting her out," and nobody dared to be candid with her but she who was now "mamma, you know."

Kate—"rare Kate," her father called her, and you can guess what she was to him—had just turned fifteen. She was a spirit of gladness, of unselfishness; and an angel in the house. Of the boys, more anon.



CHAPTER II.

THE SMALL HOUSEKEEPER.

"Unsullied beauty, sound, unbroken youth,
Patient of labor, with a little pleased,
Health ever blooming: unambitious toil."

THE lot of these little folks had been cast in a pleasant place. Home was beautiful, and its surroundings and associations were of the best. No room could be pleasanter in all the wide range of happy households than the nursery. A delicate azure tracery of vines over a white ground covered the walls, and heightened the effect of the many charming pictures hung lavishly about the room.

There were tables, and lounges, and miniature chairs; closets and nooks for toys, baskets for work, and happy inventions of all

kinds for indoor exercise. The windows, broad and deep, were hung with blue and fawn, and the curtains were swung on rings, so that a child could easily manage them.

Out of this cheerful home nest, where brooded so many happy, loving hearts, opened three little bed-rooms, one for each of the girls. Nurse Barton slept in the main apartment, and her bed and baby's crib were hid by a large crimson screen.

And the mother, the crowning glory of this charming group, what shall I say of her?

"Dear Miss Willis," as the children had always called her, had been their governess before she became their second inamma. There was no consternation, and but little surprise in the pleasant household among the girls when they knew what change was contemplated.

Only Cad, sobbing as if her little heart would break, ran to her governess, crying,

"I'm sure I shall love you dearly; but who will teach us all our lessons?"

At the answer, Cad's tears were changed to smiles.

"Everything is to go on in the old way, dear, till papa sees fit to send you to school."

So everything did go on in the old way, and a charming way it was. They were glad to have the happy privilege of calling her "mamma," and they decided in council, in Kate's bedroom, the morning after the wedding—all under their night-caps—to love her dearly, entering into solemn league never to fret or torment her.

The picture of their own dear mother still remained upon the walls in the nursery, the sitting-room, the grand parlors; and they talked as freely of her to their new mamma, as when she was still their governess.

I said only of the girls that none rebelled at this change. The boys were not so considerate. But, as Fanny often said, what can we expect of boys?

Ross, sixteen, and at college, took it into his wise young head to act the injured son for

awhile, but a two months' vacation at home cured him of his folly, made him, as he often said, "hers obediently." Phil, one year older than Fanny, was a rough, good-hearted, unfortunate fellow, very hard to manage, and a great trial to the whole household. For a time he resented the sweet authority of his new mamma, and made her very uncomfortable, but since Prince Charlie had come, Phil had grown a trifle more gentle.

And now that I have introduced you to the family of my little folks, six merry hearts in all, I shall go on with the story, for I am sure it is the story you want, so we return to Fanny and the baby.

Fanny appeared at her best when she was petting the baby. No bad humors then—the frowns were mustered out, and the dimples had it all their own way.

"Isn't he perfectly lovely? Cad, however can you play with those silly dolls when there is this charming live cherub to hug and kiss? I'm sure I don't see," she cried, pulling the

silken curls of finest floss, which, the moment her fingers left it, twisted into tiny gold rings again.

"O, I love him just the same," said Cad, coolly, "only you see it's your day, not mine. And then I must teach Petkin to be tidy, so I'm picking up all the threads and bits from the carpet. Besides, I've such a pile of clothes to wash before dinner," she added, with comical pathos; "children *do* make such dirt!"

Barton was knitting a pair of small red stockings. Her rosy English face and tidy dress made her a companionable person, even if now and then she dropped her h's. She looked up as Cad spoke.

"Shan't I wash 'em for you, miss?" she asked.

"Dear me, no, nurse. I never put out my washing;" and Cad gathered from a chair near by, a miscellaneous collection of night gowns and petticoats, and aprons, and dolls' hoods and sacks.

"I never put my washing out," she repeated,

with a prim little air of importance, while Fanny, hugging the baby, laughed at her "childishness."

"Perhaps you haven't noticed my summer kitchen, nurse?" and Cad paused on her way out with her bundle.

"No, miss, I 'aven't," nurse responded.

"Then suppose you come out on the balcony and look at it," said Cad, transferring her bundle to her shoulder.

Nurse, with an amused expression on her pink and white face, followed the small lady to what she called the balcony.

It was a sort of roofed-in gallery, over which a glorious climbing rose bush sent its long sprays, and through whose trellis clusters of lovely roses peeped, in the summer season. At one end of this place a frame had been built, one-half of which opened like a door. The floor of this portion of the balcony was covered with a layer of zinc, and that again by a neat little gray oil-cloth. All around this queer enclosure were hung various kitchen

utensils. On nails, pans and kettles were suspended, and the shelves were filled with various useful articles. In the middle of the floor stood a cast-iron cooking stove, about a foot in diameter, the tiny funnel carefully run through a partition that was tinned, as a protection against heat.

At the side of the wash-room, as Cad called it, stood a low, substantial table, on which lay, carefully rolled up, an ironing blanket. A shelf above that held the flat irons and their iron stands.

"Well, I never!" ejaculated Barton, in tones of genuine astonishment; "I never did see a little lady fixed up like this before, even in London."

"No, indeed; this is *my* place," said Cad, airing her self-esteem sufficiently; "it's useful, you know. If I was a grown lady I would have a *spl-en-did* kitchen."

"O, indeed, you're very right, miss, for one as likes housework."

"That's me," said Cad, gravely. "Under

this board are my wash tubs—see?” she lifted the board.

“Dear me! quite perfect,” sighed the nurse. “Does Miss Fanny ever work in 'ere with you?”

“Fanny! not she; her taste runs differently, you see; in clothes, and dress, and fixing up. She thinks more of company and having good times. I'm afraid she'd been spoilt,” she added, with a curious gravity, “if Charlie hadn't come. Now *I'm* domestic.”

Barton suppressed a smile, but went on admiring the arrangements, knitting as fast as she talked; indeed, neither sight-seeing nor conversation ever interfered with her nimble fingers.

“Did you always go as nurse?” asked Cad, going busily around her little domain.

“Dear me, miss,” replied Barton, a shadow falling to her honest face, “I kept my own house once—when my William was alive.”

“And was it a large house?”

“It was only three bits of rooms, miss, at

the side of a little black church, which the chimes up here do so remind me of, miss. William, he was verger there, and looked for all the world as grand as the minister himself, for he were fine looking, were my William—and I made his gown myself. I was real proud of him,” she added, mournfully.

Now Cad did not like to ask what a *verger* was; it would never do to show herself more ignorant than Barton, so, like some older persons, she “beat about the bush” as they say.

“Did your husband have any thing to do in the pulpit, Barton?”

“Lawk, no, miss, only to clean and cover it. He did show the people in of a Sunday, and it was my pride to see him in his black gown and his long rod in his 'and. It were a dim, little old church, Miss, and a dingy; and I was pew opener, and many a bit of silver I got from the gentle folks. We was very 'appy,” she added.

Cad had for the present only a sympathetic understanding of the matters nurse talked

about. She saw that her eyes were full of tears, and gathered from her tender manner that she must have been very fond of William, and William very fond of her. She even tried to imagine how the three bits of rooms looked, but found, as Barton went on, her heart full of old time memories, that they were not all like her ideal of a home, that they were dingy, and curtainless, one window looking upon a dreary court and the other upon a little yard "stuck full of old graves, deary."

"And you see it were well enough for the likes of us, miss, and we was just going on sweetly, till William took it into his 'ead as 'ow America were the place for a young man to push his footing—and he did push 'em that 'ard, miss, that he earned six feet of the soil—and my poor baby lays aside him, miss. It's not a bad country, to be sure," she went on, with quivering lips; "but I fancy sometimes I'd like poor William to be sleeping where the shadows of the old ivied wall might fall on his grave, miss."







CHAPTER III.

A LITTLE TIFF.

"Then to be good is to be happy; angels
Are happier than mankind, because they're better."

Rowe.



MEANWHILE, Prince Charlie had gone to sleep. Fanny pulled the scarlet cushions in a gorgeous heap, and laid the beautiful babe upon them, his rings of yellow hair glistening like an aureola about the perfect head. She sat there delighting her eyes with the fair picture. "If I could only paint it!" she said to herself. "I never saw anything prettier in the Academy rooms. Look, Kate!"

"Yes—what is it?" queried Kate, absently.

"What a book-worm you are! What are you reading?" persisted Fanny.

"A story," said Kate, beginning to frown.

"You are careless, Miss Kate; what would mamma say if she saw your work draggling all over the floor? Don't you know *I* should have to put my work away before I began to read?"

Kate shrugged her shoulders, and the frown grew more decided.

"What *is* the story, Kate?"

"No matter, Fanny; go on with your play, and don't trouble me. You wouldn't understand."

"O, wouldn't I? Well, Miss Wisdom, you think yourself quite a woman, I suppose. I'm not so much younger than you. Miss Propriety, get up and put your work away."

"I wish you'd go out of the nursery, Fanny Winfield," Kate said, reddening, and talking very fast. "When you have a mind to be, you're the greatest torment I know."

Fanny was inwardly in ecstasy in these little soul battles, while her mind was forming and her judgment immature, whenever she

roused in her elder sister what Cad called "improper tempers."

"Who's hateful now?" she queried. "Don't talk to me, Kate Winfield, about *my* badness, after speaking in that fashion."

"You know you *are* an awful torment," said poor Kate, in an unsteady voice, her ears tingling at her sister's speech; but the book had suddenly lost its absorbing interest.

Kate was trying very earnestly, with her mother's aid and the help of the dear Lord, to conquer herself. She knew that she was quick-tempered and impatient, and presently regretted her late impatience. So, quietly putting aside her book, she folded up her work, while Fanny looked on, rather crest-fallen, placed it neatly away in the basket appropriated to it, and then going softly forward, knelt down and kissed the baby on his fair flushed cheek.

"No wonder we all love him so," she said, softly, and her face seemed like an illumination.

"Kate, I didn't mean to hurt you," blurted Fanny.

"And I didn't mean to make such speeches, I suppose," laughed the elder sister; "at least I always feel afterwards as if I hadn't meant to. I wonder if it isn't almost time for mamma to come home."

At that moment the door opened, and Cad's "angel" looked in. Cad's angel was "mother," and never was face more welcome. Fanny forgot even Prince Charlie, as the clear, sweet eyes met hers, so alight with trust, confidence and maternal love.

"Where is my baby?" asked Mrs. Winfield; and Kate moved aside, revealing the sleeping child.

"Isn't he lovely?" asked worshipful Fanny.

"Charming, asleep or awake," was the response of the gratified mother, as she stood looking down upon him, her lovely face rippling into smiles. "Well, girls, what have you been doing in my absence? Give an account of yourselves."

"I have finished my work, mamma; I wonder if it is nice enough to suit your critical eyes?" said Kate, laughing, as she brought forward her work-basket.

"Perfect!" her mother responded, with an approving nod. "And how do you get on, Fanny?"

"I've been taking care of the baby," said Fanny, with heightened color.

"One week at a pillow case! O, Fanny!"

"I can't be sewing forever!" cried Fanny, pettishly, irritated that her mother had no praise for her.

Mrs. Winfield looked grave.

"My dear, I don't want you to be sewing forever," she said, in her low, sweet voice; "you know that."

Fanny plucked at her sleeve, and made a mental apology. Gentleness quite subdued this poor little girl, who was so often a victim to her own hot temper. Her lips trembled.

"I did mean to have it finished," she said, humbly. "I'll try to do it to-morrow."

Her eyes met those of Cad's "angel," and saw a smile there. She was conquered, and springing to her feet, flew with outstretched arms to her mother, who was quite ready to offer the kiss of peace.

"I shall never, never be good," she half sobbed.

"O, yes, you will, my darling; remember it is only one step at a time. Every right resolution makes you so much stronger. Only have patience with yourself. Here comes nurse, and the clock says four. We must be ready for papa in an hour. He wants his little folks to be punctual, you know."

So the nurse took Prince Charlie, whose happy little face beamed smiles upon all, and the girls scampered toward the little bedrooms, which were also their dressing-rooms, to get on fresh aprons, and make themselves neat and pretty before the dinner bell rang.



CHAPTER IV.

RIBBONS.

"Alas! how light a cause may move
Dissension between hearts that love."

RIGHT sunshine had come again, and Fanny, in a very good humor, looked over the little stock of ribbons folded away in the drawer. She had chosen her favorite color, and her face was in the water, when a tiny tap came at the door.

"Who's there?" cried Fanny, vigorously applying the towel, a little angry at the interruption. "If it's you, nurse, I don't want any help."

"It's me!" piped Cad's decisive little voice.

"Well, what do you want?"

"Open the door, please."

"What a bother you are!" and Fanny reluctantly unfastened the door.

"It's *so* queer to lock yourself in," said Cad, as she composedly entered the room; just like State's prison. *I* never do. I only wanted to know what ribbons you were going to wear."

"You provoking little thing! Was that all? and papa nearly here. Why blue, of course."

"Now, that's too bad; *I* wanted to wear blue to-day."

"Well, you can, if you wish; of course no one is going to prevent you," said Fanny, moving the door impatiently for Cad to be gone.

"No, I can't; of course I can't, or shan't if you do. You know mamma never likes us to wear the same colors. You've worn blue for three days; I think you might change."

"But I won't!" said Fanny, sturdily; "I'm oldest."

"Step by step," thought Fanny to herself, as her mother's words echoed along the corridors

of her heart; but the little demon of selfishness was uppermost; she had taken her stand on the blue, and it would never do to yield to Cad. The child's disappointed face stung her a little, but she had not yet learned the divine grace of giving up.

"I won't wear any ribbon then," said Cad with energy, turning away crestfallen. "O dear, I think you are a most disobliging sister. I wish——" she put her hands to her lips, and marched out of the room.

"What do you wish?" called Fanny; but Cad had disappeared.

"I *do* wonder what she wished?" mused Fanny, her cheeks glowing. "Dear me, I hope she didn't wish I was dead. What would mamma say to such a wicked temper? Cad is capable of being very naughty, though she is such a steady little thing. What a dreadful awful thing to wish her sister dead—if she did, and I'm afraid that was just what she said in her heart."

All this time she had been braiding her

glossy brown hair. Very pretty it was, darker than Cad's, with just a dash of gold making it lustrous. After it was in order, she turned to her bureau, and again opened the top drawer.

"Cad's things never looked like that," she said, with a self-approving smile, and indeed the small receptacle was quite a picture. Every thing was in beautiful order; there were boxes for ribbons, for handkerchiefs, for all the various little articles of the toilet—symmetry and delicacy of detail everywhere.

Opening her ribbon box, it disclosed a little rainbow of colors—blue, pink, crimson, orange, purple. All these silken treasures were carefully folded away.

"To be sure she might wear some other color just as well as not; pink for instance, was always becoming; but she had said blue, and blue it should be, even if it was Cad's favorite color, and Cad should break her heart over it. It would never do to yield; Cad would presume upon it, and bother her at all times and seasons." Her brow grew wrinkled

as she stood there, perplexed and undecided. Why not go to her sister's door and say, "Cad, wear the blue if you like? I'll give up."

Once her hand was on the lock, but that perverse little spirit that is no respecter of persons, but dwells alike in the hearts of young and old, triumphed, as it too often does, and gave Fanny one chance the less for happiness.

"I don't care," was her defiant ejaculation, when the pretty ribbon, after a series of patient efforts to let itself be tied, snuggled down into an irreproachable bow and knot. "I told Cad I should wear it, and I will. I wonder what she will wear?"

Her glance into the mirror as she finished gave her no pleasure. She began to sing, seeing it wanted some time to the dinner hour yet; but the effort was a spiritless one, so she went into the nursery. Her room was between Cad's and Kate's.

Presently Cad came smiling out of Kate's room. Fanny's heart misgave her.

"What have you been in there for, Cad?" she asked, following her sister.

"Nothing you care for," said Cad, a little saucily.

Presently Kate came out.

Fanny took up a book, and pretended to read, but curiosity, a little imp that never yet knew how to lie dormant, got the better of her indifference.

"What did Cad want in your room, Kate?" she asked.

"She wanted me to do something for her."

"Did you lend her a ribbon?"

"Why, no," replied Kate, gravely; "she has ribbons enough of her own."

"Just as if she should be humored in every thing!" muttered Fanny.

"Cad is a generous little thing," said Kate.

Fanny winced. "Then I suppose she told you about the ribbon."

"She was crying a little, dear, and I asked her," said Kate, cautiously. "I'm sure it was natural; she didn't mean to tattle."

"I don't see why two of us can't wear one color if we like," said Fanny, pettishly.

"If it don't please mamma, I think that is reason enough."

"Well, then, Cad's 'angel' is very arbitrary," responded Fanny, hotly.

"O, Fanny!"

"Other children wear what they please."

"But perhaps mamma's rule, if carried out, would make us more self-sacrificing."

Fanny's cheeks turned crimson.

"I'm not going to change now, at any rate," she said, in a low voice; "there isn't time; besides, I'm the oldest, and have a right to wear blue straight along, if I like."

"In love preferring others to yourself," said Kate, and Fanny knew what she meant; it was her mother's favorite saying. She turned away, quite convinced, but unwilling to say so. Suddenly she remembered an act of self-denial Cad had practised in her behalf only the week before.

A friend had sent the three girls three pretty

aprons as presents. Fanny's was buff, elaborately braided with blue. Kate's white, edged with scarlet; and Cad's white, embroidered in black. This last was undeniably the most beautiful of the three, and so Mrs. Winfield decided. Fanny looked at it longingly, but said nothing, and Cad took the apron to her room in high glee. But Fanny's longing face haunted her, and the little creature was never so happy as when she gave pleasure to others.

That night, when Fanny went to her room, she found a neat parcel on her table, on which lay the following note:

"Dear Sister Fanny—I much rather you would have the black and white. It is rather too old for me, I guess. I told mother, and she was quite willing. Don't say a word, but only hand me the buff and blue one to-morrow. It is all my own doing, and I rather you would have it. I like the buff and blue.

"Your loving

CAD."

Fanny's cheeks grew hotter as she remembered this nice, sisterly little note. She felt like pulling off the blue ribbon, which was hateful to her now, but just then the dinner-bell rang.





CHAPTER V.

A HOME-KING.

"There is on earth no blessing like affection,
It soothes, it hallows, elevates, subdues."



FANNY'S first glance at the dinner-table was towards Cad, after all were seated and a blessing had been asked. To her consternation, Cad wore a lovely blue bow, all striped with white satin. Where in the world had the child managed to find it? thought Fanny. She had never seen it before.

Cad bridled a little, and looked conscious and triumphant.

Such very little things make people happy or miserable; such very little things awaken perversities and jealousies. A miner's lamp

holds a very small flame, and yet many an explosion has been caused by its tiny wick.

All through the dinner-hour, though her favorite dishes graced the table, Fanny could think of nothing but that wonderfully pretty blue and white ribbon. Once she noticed a comical side-glance pass between Cad and Kate, and the mouthful of golden salmon almost choked her.

"Hateful things!" she said to herself. "I should like to know what the secret is. They just mean to make me feel bad. I wish I had worn any thing but blue; I never shall like it again."

She did not once wish she had pleasantly yielded to Cad, and so saved herself some mortification.

Fanny's attention was soon diverted, however, by something her father was telling Mrs. Winfield in relation to a little West Indian cousin; but still Cad's top-knot, as she sarcastically called it, predominated, and she only half-heard.

Mr. Winfield often took his children into his confidence. He never neglected them because they were children, never thought they were too young to trust, never left them wholly to the guardianship of their mother. He was a wise, strong, faithful, affectionate father. All their little wants interested him; their griefs were not too trivial to enlist his warm sympathies.

The children looked up to him with an affectionate reverence, which made him seem a king among them. His blue eyes, broad, clear brow, red lips, and the glowing smile so full of the heart's sunshine, won for him lavish praise in that little circle, an intense love and admiration which kings might envy.

"I wonder what shops were bought out to-day;" he said, as they rose from the table. "I saw a certain charming lady driving home, smothered in bundles."

"Not quite so bad as that," laughed his wife. "I have only bought new suits for the children."

"You didn't buy me a suit though—it was only the girls;" said Phil, with the shadow of a sneer on his spirited face. "I go and get my measure taken, and every thing comes home, made."

"I wouldn't give one of my girls for two of you, my man," said Mr. Winfield. Phil's boyish assumption of superiority was very disagreeable to him. The boy was always derogating from the sisterly element, making it appear weak, and also something to be ashamed of.

"Our Phil must learn to treat his sisters with respect;" he often said to his wife. "It will be the boy's salvation, rough little cub that he is."

Phil felt the reproof that his father's words conveyed, and sheepishly hung his head. Protected by a social life that was calculated to bring out all his best energies, he, yet held aloof from "the girls," and lost something of the refining process which his rough nature needed. He had been a sort of a little Pariah

from his infancy. Having been sent to a school far from home after his mother's death, three years among kindred spirits had nearly caused the ruin of his finer impulses. His father saw and regretted the mischief that had been wrought, and decided that his education should henceforth be carried on at home.

Phil rebelled stoutly for some time, but Mrs. Winfield, "angel" as she assuredly was to him, brought all her noble talents to bear upon his reformation. Not that the boy was in any way really vicious, but rough, uneasy, and utterly lacking in veneration for the sweeter proprieties of home-life. He had made sufficient progress, however, to cause his father to feel more hopeful of his future. The boy was a bright, handsome, though almost incorrigibly awkward and bashful fellow, of a temperament easy to be misunderstood, and very sullen under attack, though readily following the voice of kindness.

His father early labelled him a curiosity, and

willingly gave him into the skilful hands of his wife.

The boy skulked off as the rest of the children followed their parents into the sitting-room, where the purchases were laid out for inspection. It was a pleasant sight to see Mr. Winfield looking them over, and comparing notes with his wife as to the becomingness of color and texture.

"Pure and beautiful," he said, holding up a pale blue silk pattern. "I hope my Kate will think of that every time she puts it on, and let the inner temple correspond with the outer decoration.

"And here is white for our little Cad—spotless as the snow, and transparent as her thoughts and motives ought to be," he added, making her quite a little princess as he threw the voluminous folds over her curly head.

"This for Fanny," he continued. "What color do you call it. O, maize—like pale, beaten gold, cool and lustrous. My dear, do you study their dispositions so accurately as

to match them with color? Fanny will be like an ear in the silk, and shine in her good deeds, I hope."

"Come girls," he added, in a hearty voice, as he watched them delightedly admiring the fabrics, "away with your fineries, after thanking mamma for her nice gifts. Bring in Prince Charlie; turn the gas higher, and let us have music—with light.

The Winfield sitting-room was the admiration of all who saw it. Its situation was in the west wing, and eight lofty windows let in the light from roof to floor. Cad sometimes called it the Cathedral room. All sorts of cosy easy-chairs abounded. Great ottomans, heaped with cushions, stood at convenient distances, a crystal chandelier hung suspended from the centre of the ceiling, each burner the fac-simile of a wax candle. The curtains were gray and crimson. There was an upright piano, there were recesses filled with books, A great round table stood in the corner, which the children designated as their study,

and where, daily, Mrs. Winfield heard them recite. Globes and maps and pictures were all in appropriate niches—but the busiest, prettiest, most cheerful spot of all, was at the central table, drawn up in front of the fire of blazing sea-coal; the table around which all gathered, with its wide cloth of crimson, and the great Turkish rug at their feet, where Grim, the family cat, sat and surveyed them one by one, purring her satisfaction, or else held her sleepy head between her paws, giving now and then a blink for assent, when she considered that her opinion was called for. The floor was of polished inlaid wood, brightened here and there by exquisite rugs and circular mats; altogether, it was just the room for children to be happy in.

Barton brought in the baby, and after a kiss all round, and no end of hugs, as Cad said, he was snuggled down by Grim, who allowed his little fat hands to disarrange the niceties of her pretty fur-toilette, and sang to herself as if she liked it.

Phil went over to the globes, partly because they were always a source of delight to him, partly because he liked to be out of the way, and occupy himself with vain wishing, that there was another grown boy to keep him in countenance.

Mr. Winfield stretched himself upon a lounge, "to take it easy," as he said, and get the cobwebs pulled out of his tired brain. Fire-light and gas-light flooded the whole room, which was already full of crimson flushes.

"This is my kingdom, my paradise," he mentally ejaculated, as his eyes wandered about the beautiful space, and his soul drank in the music of the sweet ballad Kate was singing. "I wonder"—and a shadow fell on his brow, but no one heard the sigh that came with it—"if any other place in all this world would ever seem like it?"

As if in answer to his unexpressed thought, his wife spoke up:

"The parlor at Redbow is very much like this room."

"Ah! out in the wilderness. I should hardly think it possible," he said.

"Not quite so spacious, or beautifully furnished; indeed, it is a plain room, and there are fewer windows. But on the south, there's a noble bay window, and on the west, two nearly as high as these. The chief beauty of the room, however, is an oval of plate-glass, larger than our parlor mirror, let into the wall, giving one of the most splendid views of forest scenery, of rocks and leaping cascades, that ever the blue heavens shone upon."

Mr. Winfield smiled at his wife's enthusiasm, noting with all a lover's admiration the glow which made her sweet face so lovely.

"The name is a pleasant one," he said.

"Redbow—yes, as pleasant as the mountain is grand," she responded; "but the house is smaller than this, and it looks a little forbidding from the outside, because, being built of unhewn brown stone it is rough and full of projections; but the place is lovely with ivy, the first root of which was brought from

Lincolnshire by an old founder of the family. Indeed, there are very many less comfortable homes than dear old Redbow would make."

It was curious that she should have thought of the charming old place at that particular moment, for she seldom spoke of it. It was her own property, and had been settled on her since her marriage, by a distant relative, who had now been dead a year. The place was in a county-town some fifty miles from the city in which the Winfields resided, and she had not seen it since her childhood.

"We will go and pay it a visit some time, dear," said her husband, quietly.

"And I am sure you will wish to take instant possession of it," laughed his wife. "I foresee that you will fall in love instantly with grand old Redbow. I never thought it would be mine, but I am glad;" and a sweet smile parted her lips.

"In case of any misfortune"—the words had not passed his lips when her smile faded, and she looked anxiously toward him.

"I was only thinking," he said, with a smile so bright that the cloud through which she had regarded him vanished at once.

An hour passed swiftly; music, games, and now and then a little romping, gave the children plenty to do. Barton, in the back-ground, was crooning the baby to sleep with the fag end of an old English ballad; Phil sat curled up in his remote corner, studying Alaska, his chin on his hands, and his eyes partially closing in spite of himself.





CHAPTER VI.

"THERE'S GIRLS ENOUGH."

"And I tell ye a story, a story so merry,
Concerning the abbot of Canterbury."

"**H**ERE, my chits," said Mr. Winfield, suddenly rousing himself from the reverie into which he had fallen, "what say you to a story, a genuine, live, true story?"

Another moment and a merry audience had gathered round him, all breathless and flushed with play. All but Phil, and he was fast asleep. So was Prince Charlie, and nurse had just set another row of crimson stitches; the baby's basket-cradle stood at her feet.

Mr. Winfield smiled at the expectant group; perhaps no one noticed that the smile was a sad one.

"Once upon a time"—he began; every eye was fixed upon him; the girls drew long breaths—"once upon a time a young man went out into the world to seek his fortune."

They looked at each other, every happy face bright. Nobody could tell a story quite equal to papa.

"The young man was handsome, ardent, daring and ambitious. In a far off country where frost was never seen, where all the year round flowers bloom and fruits ripen, and palm trees whisper to the stars, their nearest relations, he found a post of duty. When he left his own home, there was great sorrow there. The old father and mother wept to think they might never see their son any more. They never did. Five years passed and they were gone—laid to rest in the old church yard of their native town. The news that they were dead made the young man sorrowful, but his lot was cast in that far off country; his business prospered, he had married a gentle, beautiful lady, and was content to stay.

“Lovely children were given him, and they made his home more charming still—but alas, they died, one after the other, before their little lips had learned to speak his name. One child, however, survived her infancy, but when this dear little girl was nearly seven years old, a great misfortune happened to her—her mother died.”

“Wasn’t that dreadful?” murmured Cad, whose arms embraced an imaginary doll, and whose eyes and lips in their droll sympathetic working had been a sight to see.

“Yes, it was very dreadful, because this young man was so far away from all his kindred, and surrounded by strange, clannish, and uncongenial associates. The poor little child had none but native servants, and her little wants were but rudely cared for.”

“How long ago did all this happen, papa?” asked Kate.

“Two years, dear—that is, it is two years now since the child’s mother died.”

“Why, uncle Harry’s wife died two years

ago in India!" and up went Fanny's hand in her eagerness, as if craving permission to speak during lesson-hours. They all laughed at this, and Fanny's eyes began to look very curious.

"Fanny is right," said Mr. Winfield, gently; "she has guessed my story"

"I thought it was little cousin Rosalind;" said Kate.

"Linda, her papa calls her in his letters," responded Cad, with a grave nod towards Kate.

"Yes, girls, it was of your cousin Linda and her father, that I have been telling you. I received a letter from my brother Harry to-day. Linda, the little girl, is on her way to America."

"On the great ocean this minute!" said Cad, with solemn eyes. "O papa, is she coming here?"

There was a long pause. Mr. Winfield was looking thoughtfully at the fire; nurse, in her interest, had dropped three red stitches.

"That is as mamma says," was the reply.

All eyes were turned to Mrs. Winfield. Cad fell down by the side of her "angel," and her great pathetic eyes were so imploring, that the mother could not forbear laughing.

"When mamma smiles, she means yes;" said Cad, and in her mind the matter was settled. She hugged her mother's knees a little, and then sprang up to see what her father had to say.

"Of course she will come," they all said together.

"Not too fast, children," continued Mr. Winfield. "Remember this poor little girl may not prove to be the most agreeable of companions. She has been left to the care of ignorant servants, petted, thwarted, and punished by turns. Possibly she is spoiled. Harry hints as much, and describes her as being a little dark firebrand, wilful and passionate. She might keep us in hot water. Her father writes me that I am at liberty to place her in a good boarding-school: but,

poor little motherless wean! it would seem hard to do that."

"O, papa, it would be downright-cruel!" said impulsive Fanny.

"I think Fanny is right," said Mrs. Winfield in her sweet, low voice.

"Mamma, you *are* just an angel!" exclaimed Cad, with enthusiasm, and tripping on the rug as she flew to kiss her, fell plump into her arms, to the amusement of the whole company.

"What says Kate?" queried her father, when they were quiet again.

"I hope mamma will decide to take her; besides," she added after a thoughtful pause, "she might be a wholesome discipline."

There was another outburst of merriment at this sage speech, so loud that it waked Phil up, and that young savage chose to fancy that he was the cause of the general mirth.

"It's all girls know," he said wrathfully. "I suppose you think I've been asleep. I hain't; I heard every word."

"Come now, what have we been talking about?" asked Cad, going towards him.

"It's Dives and Lazarus, I bet;" said Phil, sleepily. "You girls are such fools!"

This reached his father's ear.

"Phil," he said sternly, "if I did not make due allowance for your long nap, and consequent stupidity, I should punish you for that speech. You must take it back, sir."

Phil put on his hardest face.

"They're always laughing at a fellow," he muttered.

"Take it back, sir," repeated his father, rising.

"Yes, sir," said Phil, a little scared, retreating into his corner, where he protested in dumb show, and scowled in silent indignation.

Cad, always pitiful, crept round to his side and told him the news, which quite scared away his temper. The boy's face was a study, as he exclaimed:

"Another girl!" and he turned the globe rapidly, till he found India. "There's where

she was; why couldn't she stay there? It's a great deal nicer place than this. Folks ride on elephants. I wouldn't a come, but"—and his face lighted up—"maybe she'll be drowned."

"You dreadful boy!" gasped Cad.

"I shouldn't cry," retorted Phil, twirling the globe; "there's girls enough."

"And boys are just as wicked as they can be," said Cad; "I'm glad I haven't got a boy in all my family."

"Girls make 'em so," was Phil's sententious reply. "Your family! what's dolls?" with a sneer.

The controversy was broken in upon just here, and the little folks sent off for the night.





CHAPTER VII.

HEROIC PHIL.

Aromatic plants bestow
No spicy fragrance while they grow;
But crushed, or trodden to the ground,
Diffuse their balmy sweets around."

IN discussing affairs of state, men and children are somewhat alike; they are both liable to be carried away with enthusiastic impulses, and rate the prospective benefits much higher than their merits warrant. So in the little state convention held in the nursery that night, for the children were allowed a reasonable amount of time in which to talk over matters, the girls were nearly wild with anticipation.

"I am *sure* it will be splendid!" cried Fanny.

"Its just like going to have a grand Christmas present," said Cad; "though to be sure, we know what it will be."

"We must be very kind to her," said Kate, seriously. "Of course she can't help liking such a home as this; but then every thing will be so new to her."

"Snow and ice instead of oranges, for instance," said Fanny. "The square looked like a frosted plum-cake this morning. O, girls, wont she be a curiosity to us? I wonder if she will bring presents, and of course there'll be no end of splendid dresses; uncle Harry is rich, you know—enormously rich I have heard; and stuffs from India are always costly and beautiful."

Cad had begun to undress Petkin, enlivening the occupation by a little serious talk to that passive young lady, who was supposed to be too sleepy to hold her eyes open.

"My darling," she said in an undertone, "you mustn't mind what your Aunt Fanny says about dress. Don't give your little mind

up to vanity and fine clothes, or else I shall make you wear calico to the end of your life. I won't have pride and nonsense."

Kate was putting things in place. It was her duty to make the nursery thoroughly presentable before she went to bed.

"I suppose she will bring fine clothes," she said quietly; "but I don't care for that. We all dress well enough; what I want, is to find her pleasant and attractive, but I'm afraid she will be very selfish and hard to please."

"Do you hear that, Petkin?" murmured Cad, tying the doll's nightcap strings, "selfishness is abominable."

"There, now you're going back on her," cried Fanny, in answer to Kate's remark.

"I go back on her!" said Kate, laughing; "why I shall do my very best to make her happy, and even if she should be very disagreeable, I shall remember that she's a poor little orphan girl. Just think what a set we were till dear dear Miss Willis came."

"Odd enough that sounds;" said Fanny.

"I remember," piped Cad; "you and Kate used to fight awful."

"Yes, we were savages almost," murmured Kate.

"I 'spose I was as bad as any of you," said Cad, sagely tucking Petkin snugly away in her four-post bedstead with its miniature quilt and ruffled pillows. Then looking intently into dolly's staring eyes with motherly sympathy, she whispered dolly's prayers.

Fanny always laughed at that, but it was one of Cad's soberest duties.

"If cousin Linda comes, Cad, she will make a raid among your dolls."

"She shall have them all," said Cad in a generous outburst; "at least, I'll give her her choice;" she added, after a moment of meditation—"provided she don't pick out the very best. And I'm going to ask mamma to let her sleep with me; my bed's the biggest, and I shall so love to dress and take care of her."

"Well, I rather think your older sisters ought to have that privilege," said Fanny.

"Privilege!" exclaimed Kate: "I should call it an infliction."

"Kate is surely going back on her," said Fanny with tears in her eyes. "Going back," was Phil's favorite expression.

"How foolishly you talk, Fanny. I was only thinking that you two youngsters will soon tire of the 'privilege' and turn her over to me."

"She may be drowning this very moment!" said Cad with a scared face. "I shut my eyes and saw a great ship all on fire, like that in the picture down stairs; and O, dear me, she may never come here at all!"

"I advise you to keep your eyes open," laughed Kate, "and see I have put every thing to rights—and you had better go to bed, both of you."

"One would think you had the control of this family," said Fanny, pertly; but she kissed her sisters and went into her own little room. The moon, large and yellow, brightened every object visible, so that there

was no need of any other lights. Fanny, while taking off her blue ribbon, suddenly remembered that she had forgotten to ask Cad about the blue and white bow; so she ran out softly and knocked at Cad's door. The little girl lifted her head from the pillow as Fanny, shining white in the moonlight, stood at the foot of her bed.

"I say, Cad," whispered Fanny, "where did you get your blue and white ribbon?"

"O, that's a secret, I guess," replied Cad; her rosy face suddenly disappearing in the pillow.

Fanny stood there, perplexed and provoked. Cad peeped out, and something in the irresolute face conquered her.

"It partly came off of cigar-boxes," she said, laughing.

"Cad!"

"It's a fact. You know Phil gets them to make houses of—I mean the boxes—and they throw in a handful of ribbons sometimes. He gave them to Kate, and she contrived them,

and sewed them together. Weren't they lovely?" and Cad sat up in bed, her eyes shining.

"I mean to make some," said Fanny.

"I don't think you ought to," said Cad, pathetically, her countenance falling.

"Well, I won't," responded Fanny.

"Come and kiss me."

Fanny kissed her.

"Hug me."

Fanny hugged her very hard.

"There! now we'll never speak cross to each other again, will we?"

"I guess not," said Fanny with some hesitation.

"Now, go right to bed;" and Cad's face disappeared.

"I am going—but—Cad—"

"Well;" whispered the child.

"You know when you came out of my room you said you wished—now what did you wish?"

"What *did* I wish!" murmured Cad, reflec-

tively looking at the moon. "Let me think. O, it was *awful*, Fanny. I wished I hadn't such a mean, ungenerous sister—there! I did, honest—wasn't it terrible?"

Fanny was silent.

"Are you angry with me?"

"No, dear."

"I'm awful sorry."

"Don't say awful, Cad."

"Sure enough, what a word! and I never allow my Petkin to talk slang. Good-night, Fanny."

Fanny went to her own room feeling great relief that Cad's wish had been no worse.

"It was ugly in me, though," she murmured, blushing at the recollection. "I don't believe I shall ever like blue so well again."

At that moment the neighboring church bells rang with a loud, quick clang. The engines rattled along the streets, and there were hoarse cries from boys and firemen. Fanny had a great dread of fire; she sprang from the bed; surely that lurid light, making

every object crimson, was not the moon. The fire must be very near perhaps their own beautiful house was in danger. There were voices in the nursery.

"Barton!" she cried. "Barton! come here, quick!"

The door opened, and there stood Kate in her night dress. In the red reflection of the fire she looked like a spirit. The bells grew wilder; hoarse shouts sounded from the street.

"Fanny, it looks as if the world was all ablaze," said Kate.

"O, where is father?" cried Fanny in a paroxysm of terror. "Only hear them—call papa!"

"He has gone out. He sent a servant up to tell us to be quiet, and that there was no danger yet."

"What shall we do, Kate?" cried Fanny, wringing her hands. "The very air is hot; I can hardly breathe. I know the fire has reached us; see the sparks! I'm going to pack my best things up."

Presently Cad came in, bewildered and rubbing her eyes.

"What is it?" she cried. "What makes things so red? It's a fire! O, Kate, we shall be burned up. Fanny, what are you doing?"

"I'm going to turn every thing out into sheets," said Fanny, tugging desperately at the bureau drawers. "There you stand, and never offer to help."

"Hadn't you better dress yourself first?" asked Kate, half laughing. "I'm not afraid. Papa will let us know in plenty of time; he said so."

"I don't care," retorted Fanny. "I'm not going to have the roof on fire over our heads before I begin to save things."

By this time the bed and floor were strewed with dresses, ribbons, laces, and a great plaid coverlet had been called into requisition, at whose stubborn corners she was pulling as if her life depended upon the exercise.

"I guess I'll get my dolls together," cried Cad, bursting into tears. "The cooking-stove

must go, I suppose, and all the kitchen furniture; but Maud and Felice, and poor old Petkin, I can't lose them."

"Cad," said Kate quietly, "can't you believe papa? It seems Fanny wont, but I think you and I ought to."

Fanny paused a moment with puzzled face. She remembered what unbounded faith she had always professed in her father.

"Miss," said nurse, knocking at the door some moments afterward, "your pa sent me to say that there's no danger now. The fire took itself another way—it's most out, too."

Down fell the corners of the coverlet.

"Now you've got everything to put back," said Cad, laughing.

"I might have known," muttered impetuous Fanny, and bit her lip.

"You should have had more faith in papa," said grave Kate. "But never mind—I'll help you."

"And we'll never tell, will we?" queried Cad, roguishly.

"I don't want any help," Fanny retorted, and her face said so plainly "please go out," that both girls left her.

When they had gone, she could have cried for very shame. There was at least an hour's hard work before her.

"It serves me just right," she muttered, disconsolately. "I might have known papa's first thought is always for us. Next time I'll believe."

There had, however, been some cause for fear. Mr. Winfield was at first seriously alarmed, and had been back and forth during the progress of the fire, several times.

Phil, who had not thought of sleep when the alarm first sounded, was on his feet and at the window in a twinkling. He ached to be on the street; he threw up the sash and shouted himself nearly hoarse. Finally, forgetting all considerations of loyalty and obedience, his boy-nature triumphed. Hastily slipping on his clothes, he found his way down stairs without being noticed, ran out

of the house, and was soon amidst the throng of noisy, toiling firemen.

An hour after that Mr. Winfield returned. An object met his eyes that startled him, begrimed, covered with water and dirt, and crouching up against the door.

"Who are you?" he asked, thinking the creature some victim of the fire, shelterless and beggared.

A face was lifted up in the clear moonlight, and a hoarse voice said:

"It's me, father!"

Mr. Winfield stood for a moment like one petrified; he could scarcely believe the evidence of his senses. He dared not trust himself to speak, for he was very angry; he only opened the door and motioned the culprit in. There, under the glare of the gas, stood Philip, dirty, torn, disgraced, and as his father thought, defiant.

"You young rascal!" said Mr. Winfield, deliberately, "is there no honor in you? Do you mean to grow up a rebellious, bad man?"

Go to your room. To-morrow I shall punish you severely. See here, sir; you are not to leave your chamber till I release you. Do you hear me?"

"Yes, sir," said Phil, doggedly, and went creeping up stairs. There he divested himself of his soiled clothes, and plunged his face and hands in water. And now one might see that the poor red hands were waled with red and livid stripes. There was a crimson patch on his forehead; his hair was singed, and he crept into bed smarting from head to foot, and once there, he turned his face to the pillow and wept for very anguish.

The next day his food was sent up to him, and the next.

At the close of the second day, however, Mr. Winfield was startled by the call of a stranger, who asked for Phil.

"I have been looking for the boy ever since the fire," he said, "and this morning, one of the hose company directed me here."

Mr. Winfield's heart throbbed painfully.

What escapade of his poor wild boy was now to be brought to light?

"He has already been punished severely," he said.

"Punished! punished?" The man started from his seat. "Why sir, I have come to offer him one hundred dollars for his bravery."

It was Mr. Winfield's turn to be astounded.

"Really, sir, I don't understand what you allude to, at all. The boy left my house on the night of the fire; he knew it was against my orders. He came home a scarecrow, wet and draggled, and I sent him to his room, and have kept him there."

"Poor little fellow—then he did not tell you?"

"He told me nothing, sir."

The man smiled.

"He's a splendid little man," he said, "and you have reason to be proud of him. When my house was on fire, and my family safely out, my little lame daughter, an invalid from her birth, cried bitterly because her pet canary

was left in the flames. It seems your boy stood near and heard her cries. I offered one hundred dollars to any fireman who would rescue the little creature.

"But mark you, before I had offered this reward, your son, if I am not mistaken in my information, had plunged into the house, gone its entire length, secured the cage, dashed out of a back building, gone round by an alley, and given the bird in charge of some person in a neighboring street. My little girl was wild with joy at the restoration of her favorite. I don't know but its loss in so frightful a manner might have caused her death. As it is, Dick is singing in his cage to-day, and I owe this pleasure to your brave little son. The fire destroyed the house I lived in, but beyond that has not injured me, and I have come to give this money to the boy who risked his life without promise of fee or reward."

Mr. Winfield listened to this story in extreme surprise. He thought of that night and the sorry appearance of Phil; he thought of

his heavy hand on the boy's shoulder; his stern words, Phil's uncomplaining submission—his lonely vigils in his own room, suffering, perhaps, from wounds, bruises and burns.

Barton was just then passing the door.

"Tell master Philip I wish to see him," he said.

The two men waited in silence till the boy came down, and entered the room with a downcast face. The spot on his forehead had blistered and was much discolored; he hid his hands awkwardly. His bright face was clouded and his features discomposed.

"My son!" said Mr. Winfield, an unwonted tenderness in his tones. Phil drew a long breath and his lip quivered, but his eye grew brighter. Mr. Winfield was unmanned; he could not trust his voice, but nodded to the stranger.

"I have come to reward you, my boy, for your gallant behavior on the night of the fire, in saving my poor little girl's pet bird from the flames."

The blood rushed all over Phil's face; his lips worked, he looked askance at his father, and then his head fell on his bosom.

"Was that your deed, my son?" his father asked.

"I—yes sir—I went into the house, and I—I got the cage down; 'twas pretty hot," said Phil, in a low voice.

The two men looked at each other. There were tears of joy in Mr. Winfield's eyes. Although the act of disobedience in itself was wrong, yet the brave, disinterested deed of his boy ennobled him, and gave the father hope, when all had been so reprehensible before. It had been a silent heroism, and proved a certain, positive grandeur in the boy's character, underlying his rudeness and rashness.

"I have one hundred dollars here for you, my boy," said the stranger.

Phil shook his head. "I'd rather not take it, sir," he said sturdily. "I wouldn't like to have money for it."

"But it will be a great disappointment to my sick little girl, who asks me about it every day; and she is such an invalid that she must be gratified."

Under the circumstances, it seemed almost impossible to refuse the reward, and then for the rest of that day Phil had enough of hero-worship, for the story was told from garret to cellar. Phil's hands, poor boy, were dressed and kissed most tenderly by Cad's "angel," tears rolling down her cheeks as she performed her task.

"My dear boy," she said, "after this, I shall always think the best of you. Don't tell me you hate girls, when the tears of that poor little lame creature made you such a hero. You are a great deal better and tenderer than you know, my dear."

The rest of the week was given to Phil, and wherever he went he was an object of admiration, and some way, it even got into the papers.



CHAPTER VIII.

COFFEE AND CURRY.

A tiny lady, yet so old,
She talked of diamonds and gold,
Of fashions new and follies old."

IT was still holiday and high carnival at the Winfield mansion. Kate and Fanny had been busy ornamenting the nursery. Pine-boughs and evergreens smiled out sunnily from every nook and corner. Baskets, vases, tables and mantels were full of verdure. These, with flowers from the small, well kept conservatory, made the room alive with blooms.

On the day with which our chapter opens, Fanny had taken great pains with her toilet, as the fluttering ribbons from neck, head and arms proclaimed. Cad had bestowed hours

of patient labor upon her household treasures. Her dolls had been newly dressed; her little house of four rooms, swept and garnished; the kitchen shone, and nurse declared, admiringly, that "a more perfect little born 'ousewife she had never seen."

Fanny had been somewhat remiss in her devoirs to Prince Charlie, his dimpled fingers and her ribbons were better apart.

Kate sat in the study, reading a letter from her brother Ross, part of which ran as follows:

"I wish my father had not set his heart on making me a lawyer. I have no liking whatever for the profession. I hate the city and I dislike the law. Still, I will endeavor not to disappoint him. If he should ask me point blank what I think of the profession, my answer would be in accordance with my prejudices. How goes shop now-a-days? We used to have such jolly times! I think I was as much of a girl as any of you. Frankly, I had rather be among girls any day, than these rude fellows.

"By the by, Phil *is* a success, isn't he? That little newspaper article about him pleased the boys vastly. 'What!' they asked, 'was it your brother?' That boy will be an honor to the family; he will be the lawyer, while I shall keep a grocery, or run a farm. How is practical little Cad? One of my chums told me a little story concerning her. It was Bill Rauleigh; good fellow! you'd like him. It seems old Mr. Rauleigh, Bill's father, was very eccentric, and for years imagined that he had given up all belief in immortality. So once upon a time he planted a small lettuce-bed, and as the young plants peeped above ground they read as follows:

"'GOD IS NOWHERE.'

"It appears that father and he often held debates upon the matter. Cad was a little thing then, some six years old, reading in short syllables, and quite proud of the progress she made.

"So one day papa carried her into his neighbor's garden—it was when papa was in

the country—and presently they heard the child clapping her hands in great glee.

“‘I can read it all, papa,’ cried Cad; ‘look, O! how pretty! It says,

“‘God is now here.’

“‘No, no,’ said the old man; ‘look again, child. It reads,

“‘God is nowhere.’

“‘But hear me spell it,’ quoth confident Cad:

“‘G-o-d *God*, i-s *is*, n-o-w *now*, h-e-r-e *here*.’

“Poor old man! Cad’s logic quite overcame him. And it had such an effect upon him that he carefully pointed it just as the child had read it, and gave up his infidel notions ever after.”

Kate remembered the story; she had once heard her father tell it. “Good little Cad,” she murmured.

Kate was very fond and proud of Ross. He had always been her hero. It hurt her a little to feel that he was so unambitious, and she sometimes scolded him for his prosaic notions.

Her mother came in.

"What time will they be here, do you think?" asked Kate.

"They," meant her father and little Rosalind, the Indian cousin.

"He said five-twenty. I have just sent the carriage for them."

"Have you seen the nursery?"

"Yes, dear; it is as bright as a garden in June. When the gas is on, it will be a bower fit for the fairies."

"But don't you dread her coming, just a little?"

"No, dear, not with you for an *aid-de-camp*. I hope we shall make a happy home for the motherless child." Kate's cheek flushed, she was proud to be of service to her mother.

The girls had gathered together in the sitting-room and were listening intently for carriage wheels. Dinner had been delayed, but now the servants were busy in the dining-room beyond, and the clock pointed to a half hour after six.

Phil was but mortal, and sometimes presumed upon his sudden popularity. He came into the room and proceeded in his usual fashion to jar upon the harmony of the little group so expectantly waiting. First he turned a chair upon Fanny's toes and then tweaked her ribbons. Fanny in her anger chased him, in order to inflict chastisement upon his ears. In the race he pulled a chair from Cad, and threw down Kate's music stand.

"If there's any thing more horrid than a boy!" cried Fanny, as he sheltered himself behind the furniture.

"It's a girl," finished Phil, beginning a clog-dance, in imitation of the street Arabs.

"Phil, you know this is no place to dance in; can't you be decent?" queried Kate, after restoring her music stand to its upright position. "It seems as if you try to make yourself the pest of the house, sometimes."

"Hollo! St. Catharine!" shouted Phil, never more delighted than when he drew sparks from her; "here's the angel of the household

down on me. Don't get mad, Kate, you know I'm a 'wholesome discipline.'"

Kate's resolution gave way at this, and the old spirit asserted itself. Irritated by Phil, who continued his uncouth dance and snapped his fingers at her derisively, she caught him by the arm and shook him with all her strength. The boy flung her off, with a word such as none of that little group had ever heard from household lips, and then ran, flushed and frightened, out of the room.

The girls looked at each other with blanched faces. Kate's was whitest of them all. She had been the cause of that dreadful sin; her loss of temper had provoked him to an open defiance of God's law.

For a long time there was utter silence.

"O dear, dear," said Cad, at last, with quivering lips, "what *shall* we do?"

"HE heard it," responded Fanny in an awe-struck tone, involuntarily glancing upwards.

"I seem to hear it all over the room," said

Cad, tearfully. "I guess it poisoned the very air."

"He never meant to do it; it must have come before he thought," murmured Fanny. "What would papa do to him?"

"Papa ought to know it," said Kate shrinkingly; "and I was some to blame, though he did try me terribly;" she added, tears in her eyes.

"Shall you tell father?" asked Fanny.

"I don't believe Phil belongs to us," said Cad, with quivering lips.

"You didn't say that when he did such a noble action," Kate responded, the shadows falling more thickly upon her. She acknowledged to herself that she had been very angry when she shook him; that she was eager to hurt him in some way, and the boy's retort was only the result of the old law—like creating like. He had seen the hate in her eyes, and up leaped the bad word to his lips.

Mrs. Winfield came smilingly in and turned on the gas.

"The carriage is coming," she said, and away they all rushed to the windows, Kate giving them a sign, somehow, that Phil's mishap was not to be mentioned just now. Nearer and nearer came the sound of wheels. The carriage stopped, eager eyes looked out on the street, and then there was the pause of expectation.

Presently Mr. Winfield led in a little girl. She looked about her with great, frightened eyes. What an atom she was, and so oddly dressed, all in black.

"Children, welcome your little cousin," said Mr. Winfield cheerily. "She is tired and lonesome, and I shouldn't wonder if a little hungry."

To Kate had been assigned the duty of caring for the stranger's immediate wants. She led the passive child up stairs to the nursery, where the dinner was to be sent for that day.

Kate, as she led her into the beautiful room, smiled at sight of the decorations in honor of

such an atom. She helped her off with her hat and cloak and furs.

"I am going to stay with you here, and we shall take dinner alone, as you are so tired."

"Thank you, I am not in the least tired," said the child, and in such a grand little womanish way, that Kate was taken quite aback, and stood staring at her. "Queen of the Lilliputs," she thought, as little miss Linda seated herself with the greatest complacency, and the trouble and wonder seemed to fade out of her eyes.

"Why didn't the other children come up?" she asked in the same level tone.

"The other children!" Kate felt her dignity oozing out at her finger ends. Did the mite take her for a child?

"Mamma thought you needed rest," she answered, quite subdued in voice and manner.

"What curious windows!" continued miss Linda, looking round the room; "what a very queer place altogether! I think papa's bungalow was a good deal nicer."

"Weren't you very sorry to leave your papa?" queried Kate.

"Rather—it made me cry a little," was the reluctant confession. "If I could have brought Murdg with me—he was so clever! but he was papa's interpreter of Hindostanee. He couldn't spare him. This is a very cold country;" and she shivered a little.

"I am sorry you are cold."

"O, I'm not cold here, thanks."

"We shall all try to make you feel at home," ventured Kate, quite astounded at the child's self-possession.

"I liked the captain and the ship. I didn't want to come here," said Linda. "I don't know any one—I didn't want to come; but papa would—would—" She stopped; some passionate feeling seemed to choke her, and dropping her face in her tiny hands, she began to cry and sob.

Kate was conquered at once. Her whole heart went out in pity. She was on her knees in a moment.

"My poor little cousin!"

Something in her sweet, sympathetic voice, touched the child. She stopped her sobs for a moment, and took one long, breathless look at Kate's face. Then Kate opened her arms, and the sad little waif crept into them and cried more quietly upon her shoulder.

Presently the dinner was brought up, and daintily arranged on a little round table. Kate coaxed the child towards it.

"You must eat some chicken," she said, "and a bit of salad. You don't know how good mamma's salads are."

"I should prefer curry, chicken and iced sherry;" responded Linda, with a return to her old stateliness. "The captain always had curry for me."

"May be we will have curry to-morrow," said Kate, half laughing; "to-night we will make chicken do without. As for wine, papa never allows us to taste of that. Would a little nice tea do, instead?" Kate was quite startled at the mite's demand for iced sherry.

"I don't wish any tea," said Linda; "papa always let me drink coffee."

"Coffee and curry, and iced sherry," thought Kate; "no wonder the child is such a mite."

"We never have coffee," said Kate, demurely.

"I don't care for any dinner, then," said Linda; but Kate coaxed her a little, and she ate a small portion of the chicken.

Meantime Fanny and Cad were longing to get to the nursery. Mrs. Winfield thought it best for their cousin to come down stairs. Instead of that, Kate surprised them with the information that Miss Linda had asked to be taken directly to bed, and was then asleep.

"In my bed!" said Cad, exultingly; "then I shall see her the first thing in the morning, before any of you. I'm going to give her Felice."

The generous little girl had fought a hard battle with herself before consent had been obtained to this act of self-denial. Felice was the very choicest of all her possessions, but

the sacrifice was made, and she was quite happy over it.

Phil sat crouching behind the globes. Kate's face burned as she met his eye. He was very humble now. In the solitude of his own room he had been playing mumble-peg, but the charms of his favorite pleasure had yielded to remorse. His solid, ebony-handled knife seemed to regard him with a grim sarcasm, as it laid open blade upon its back.* The paper on the wall resolved itself into a legion of accusing faces. Conscience tortured him, and a series of desperate somersaults did not mend the matter. Over and over again a still small voice kept repeating, "Swear not at all."

"I didn't mean to," he muttered; "it just popped out itself—and—pshaw! who cares? Kate'll tell papa, I 'spose, and I shall get solitary confinement number two. Ugh! girls!" and the spite and the twist in his face would have done no dishonor to a Comanche chief, ready for the war-path.

Poor Phil proved his descent from Adam, who said, "The woman tempted me." Well for him that he came to the conclusion at last, that he had done a mean, contemptible thing.

Kate's loving heart went out to the boy, and she wanted to give him some word of condolence.

"I say," he muttered, as she managed to place herself in proximity to him, "are you going to tell on me?"

"Not unless you say I may; but papa ought to know," said Kate, gently. "I don't believe you will feel quite right till you tell him. Just tell him the whole, if you say any thing; don't spare me."

Phil twirled the globes, a bright red spot in either cheek. He knew his father would be just, perhaps generous. Kate was not surprised to be telegraphed to, later in the evening, by master Phil.

"I'm going to do it," he whispered.

"Tell father!"

"Yes; if I don't, I shall run away."

"O, Phil!" cried Kate, shrinkingly.

"Yes," said Phil, soberly. "I've got a hundred dollars. Wouldn't there be jolly times, though? I think I should make for India."

"Phil, I won't hear you talk so; what can you mean?"

"And by and by I'd be sending you presents; India shawls, and camels and elephants, you know; and I'd be a roojah, or whatever they call 'em, and wear palanquins and nan-keens, and a hat with a feather in it, and own a thousand slaves"—he paused suddenly, and broke into a laugh at Kate's anxious face.

"A fellow can make girls believe anything," he said. "I say, I'm coming down on you, though."

"You may say just what you please about me," Kate responded.

"And that's nothing."



CHAPTER IX.

CAD ANTICIPATES.

"And childish indignation
Proves many a throbbing smart."



S for Cad, she could not go to sleep for thinking of the little stranger at her side.

"She's small, and not a bit pretty. I wonder what her eyes are like! but her hair is beautiful," soliloquized motherly Cad. "There's a moon, and it's as bright as morning;" so Cad jumped out of bed to take a look at the little shapeless things hanging over the chair.

On the bureau she found a plain black velvet ribbon, in the midst of which shone a small white stone of exceeding brilliancy.

"I wonder if she wears that bit of glass?"

queried Cad, contemptuously, as she jumped into bed again. "Poor thing, I know mamma wont want her to wear that hideous black. If she hasn't got any clothes made, I'll let her have some of mine; my crimson alpacca, it's too small for me."

The little girl looked upon her cousin in much the same light that she did upon her big dolls, and fairly revelled in the anticipated delight of dressing and undressing her, and trying the effects of various colors upon her. At last she fell asleep, and on waking in the morning was surprised and a little annoyed to find her room-mate sitting up in bed, evidently taking an inventory of her new companion; a curious, intense expression, darkening her sallow, tiny face.

Cad smiled a good morning.

"Did you sleep well?" she asked, somewhat daunted at her cousin's continued stare.

"No—I didn't sleep at all. The bed rocks up and down, like the ship; don't you feel it? Are you one of the children?"

"Yes, I'm Cad," was the response. "My bed's the biggest, so they let you sleep with me. What makes you think it rocks?"

"It's the ship, I fancy. Did you ever go to sea? It's splendid! They tied me to the mast once, because it stormed and I wouldn't go below. We had plenty of fun; once they tossed me in a blanket—just a little, you know; and once they sold me. The captain bought me for lots of rupees, and then he gave me all the money. I've a box of *bon bons* in my trunk, they're delicious. I'd rather be at sea than here—O, a great deal!"

"Do you want me to help you dress?" asked Cad.

"I dress myself, thanks," said Linda, with a great assumption of womanliness. "I had an English mamma, and she taught me to take care of myself when I was five years old, though I had an Ayah of my own. She said people were lazy who let themselves be dressed. And after mamma died, I always sat at table when papa had the officers to

dinner, and behaved like a perfect lady," she added with self-complacency.

Cad's face was hid in the pillow. This odd young person made her laugh.

"I can't get used to this place," continued Linda. "I almost wish papa had let me stay in India. There were lots of mamma's relations wanted me in England. I—I'm homesick," and she began to whimper a little.

"Wait 'till you see our playthings and my kitchen-stove," said Cad, "and drive out with us, and go to the exhibitions and concerts. Papa always takes us somewhere once a week. I'm sure you'll be very happy with us, and—come a little closer, I always want to whisper it—you'll find our mamma just an angel! She'll love you just as she loves us, and you'll love her, because you can't help it. We'll keep house together, splendid! I can do every thing; bake, wash, iron and clean up. There! that's the bell, and we must get up, to be in time for prayers. Do you wear that bit of velvet round your neck?"

"O, that is my diamond!" exclaimed Linda. "Mamma had it fixed so as to fasten on velvet. I only wear it when I am dressed grandly. My clothes haven't come—there's three great boxes—and I haven't a single morning-apron—what shall I wear?"

"Won't one of mine do?" and Cad eagerly drew out half a dozen from their nest.

"Dear me—those thick, coarse things!" exclaimed the child with a wry face. "They feel almost like pongee, such as the servants wear."

Cad flushed.

"We call it nice enough for us," she responded in her spirited little voice.

"Then they don't make such fine stuff as they do in India. Please put my diamond away, I only wear it in full dress."

"Full dress," thought Cad; "she's a cut down woman."

"Is it a real diamond?" she asked, as she stowed it in one of her boxes. "Perhaps mamma had better take care of it, if it is;

diamonds are worth a great deal of money. I heard papa say he gave two hundred dollars for just a little one."

"I don't know what it cost," said Linda, with supreme disdain; "papa never cared what things cost."

"Do you like babies?" asked Cad.

"No; I hate 'em."

Cad was horrified. Her cheeks reddened scarlet, and what Kate called the "Winfield temper" blazed for a moment in her soft eyes.

"Then you ought not to see our Prince Charlie, for he is a baby. You won't want to play with dolls, and I've got oceans—from England, Paris, and all over the world. Don't like babies!" and little Cad felt her throat swell as with a sense of being unjustly treated by one whom she wished to befriend.

Linda was not so much to be blamed. She had seen only the little naked barbarians, loud-voiced and swart, who cried round the Asiatic-servants at home. She had never

touched the fair, peachy cheeks, or felt the pressure of sweet velvet lips of her own kin. Indeed she had known but few of the gentler influences of home, even during her mother's life, for fashionable society claimed all her mother's time.





CHAPTER X.

LINDA'S OPINIONS.

"I do not like you, Doctor Fell,
The reason why, I cannot tell."



FOR the first day, Linda was left very much alone, but she chose to remain with the girls, and her great eyes allowed nothing to escape her. She noted, child as she was, the nicety and beauty of the household. The white crystals of the hardened snow were objects of constant delight. The great trees in front of the dwelling, dripping with frozen pendants; the many-colored sleighs and the merry music of the bells about the necks of the horses; the brown spires of St. Mary's and its silver-toned chimes; the "white rose-leaves" falling over the world as the slow flakes came sailing down, some-

times, for the day was cloudy; above all, the sweet, reposeful, love-shadowed face of Cad's "angel,"—all these opened a new world to her, a world of action as well as sentiment, a world that was to rouse and stimulate her deadened energies.

After breakfast a formal announcement was made that there would be no lessons for the rest of the week. Books and slates were locked up with great glee. Cad called Linda to see her extinguish earth, sky and ocean, as she drew the linen covers over the globes, and then a dance without music was improvised for the occasion. Linda had chained Cad to her with rivets of steel, by declaring that had she known babies could be as beautiful as Prince Charlie, she should have loved them with all her heart.

Even Phil seemed to be on his best behavior. He had confessed his error, and been heartily forgiven, henceforth mumblepeg was divested of its satire, and the wall-paper regarded him benignantly.

Phil declared himself at first quite disgusted with his little cousin, and gave it as his deliberate opinion, cautiously expressed, however, that she looked like a shark. She, on her part, avoided him, much as a kitten avoids a rough dog; it was not in Phil's nature to be gentle.

"I like your sisters," she said confidentially to Cad, "and your mother is a lady—but that boy is very rude and teasing."

"O well, you know boys always are—that is, boys like our Phil. You see he hasn't been with us a great while, and I suspect he got his bad manners at school. But didn't you admire papa? is uncle Harry like him?"

"Handsome!" said Linda, promptly.

"O no, that's impossible," returned Cad, after a pause of astonishment. "I do not believe there's a handsomer man in all the world than our papa."

"Except mine," said Linda, sturdily, "because his hair curls and his whiskers are long."

"I don't think much of whiskers," defiant Cad responded; "whiskers don't make men handsome—cats have whiskers."

There was no response to this somewhat ungenerous speech.

That was a day however to be long remembered. Cad's kitchen was in full operation, and every one of her twenty odd dolls came out of their nooks and drawers, and shelves and corners. They were all placed in a row on one of the lounges, and Linda's great eyes shone with delight.

"Now," said Cad, a little self-reproachful on account of the whiskers, "you may have any doll you want; one, you know, only one, because I gave you Felice."

Linda walked silently back and forth. She was a long time making up her mind. One young lady in Turkish costume pleased her color-loving eye; she hesitated before a Greek, dressed in lovely robes of oriental finish, with a satin turban lightly resting on black, flowing tresses. There was Maude, dressed in

sober silk, and Nanny in a morning-wrapper of the latest fashion. Petkin was still asleep in the four-poster; Cad would have lost a finger sooner than her precious Petkin, the eldest and the dearest.

It was a great relief when Linda made her choice at last, and selected the Turkish beauty.

There were Marys, and Sallys, and Pollys, quite beneath miss Linda's notice, but very dear to the heart of this little ruler of dolls. Some were dreadfully maimed and disfigured; perpetual eruptions, broken limbs and equivocal eyes—were handy in the sickly season. In cases of measles and chicken-pox, the scarred faces came out in full force. Cad in her unwearied and beautiful motherhood treated them with special tenderness. This one she had entrusted to a careless nurse, and another had her poor nose broken in a fall from the perambulator. Another, Cad gravely asserted, lost her eyes by an attack of inflammable rheumatism, and the eyeless doll was

recompensed for her blindness by a series of ardent hugs.

"I don't see how you can like them, when they're so ugly," said Linda, making wry faces.

"But that's not their fault, poor dears," replied sympathetic Cad. "What would we do if our mammas didn't like us, if our noses were broken?"

The argument was irresistible.

"This one," pointing to an armless body, whose head always reclined on one shoulder or the other through inability of backbone, "I had when I was a bit of a baby. My own mamma made it for me, and I suppose it was very beautiful once, but I cherish it, you see, although it has got consumption so terribly that I may be called to part with it any moment. This frock was mine, and I wore it when I was six weeks old; I keep a shawl wrapped round it, to hide its poor arms."

"But it hasn't any arms," said Linda.

Cad gave a wistful look.

"We'll make-believe we don't notice that," she said softly, and her face lighted up with a smile that seemed to come from heaven.

On the whole, that was a delightful day. Fanny was very gracious to the little stranger, and Barton won her heart by telling her stories of London, the city where her mother was born.

Cad cooked a small dinner in her famous stove, and had her best tea-set out. Even Phil forgot to be ungracious, and only said he hated girls once during the day, and that was occasioned by his breaking Cad's milk pitcher, over the fragments of which a few natural tears were shed.

They were engaged in merry games after dinner, when suddenly Cad gave a great cry of delight.





CHAPTER XI.

WHAT ROSS WANTED.

"The cold, heartless city, with its forms
And dull routine ; its artificial manners,
And arbitrary rules."



HE door-bell sounded simultaneous with her cry, and Cad had flown out into the hall.

"I knew it was him!" she exultingly exclaimed, as she came in with her brother Ross, who carried a bouquet of hot-house flowers in one hand and a travelling bag in the other. "And only think, he's come to our vacation!"

"Well, puss, wait till I get my traps down;" said Ross, giving his bag to the grinning servant. "There! now I'm ready to be made a spectacle of."

He certainly did make a very pleasant spectacle, as he stood on the threshold of the brilliantly lighted room; tall, dark-eyed, and smiling, the very picture of stalwart young America preparing for its sterner march into the realms of manhood. Then came kisses and exclamations of endearment.

Ross marched up to Cad's "angel."

"I brought this all the way from the Professor's conservatory," he said, giving her the flowers, pleased at her pride of him and evident delight at his thoughtfulness.

"That's our biggest brother," whispered Cad to wondering Linda.

"How many are there of you!" said the child, whose interest was beginning to twine about something beside herself.

"O, a great many, and we are all together now."

Mr. Winfield had risen from the sofa. Ross was standing beside him telling the news. The college-buildings were under repair, so there was a vacation of several weeks. Mr.

Winfield put his arm over the young fellow's shoulder, Ross's hand slid round his father's waist. This little act, trifling as it was, revealed to the observer that complete confidence between father and son which does not always exist in such relationship.

After this, Ross was claimed successively by the sisters, and such merry by-plays as there were, such secrets told, such confidences invoked! Linda gladdened Cad's heart, so that it broke out into kisses and a hug, by a declaration that Ross was the handsomest boy she had ever seen; and Ross took very kindly to his sly little cousin. She hung on his words and treasured his smiles.

"Won't we have grand times, now?" murmured Fanny, wondering secretly if her ribbons were equal to the occasion.

After a while Kate and Ross sat down in a corner, to have an old-fashioned chat. Then Kate must sing one of the dear old songs, and it really seemed as if the very atmosphere grew rose-colored, and shining wings flitting

past, left their radiance upon every gentle face.

Cad undertook to teach Linda a new tidy-stitch, the bright gayly colored wools running over bands and dresses. Fanny and Phil played battledore, and Prince Charlie crowed in Hebrew or Chaldaic, I am not certain which.

"I tell you what, it refreshes a fellow to get home once in a while," said Ross, marching back and forth with his mannish step. "I don't believe any of our boys have such a royal place as this to go to. Crow away little prince, I don't wonder;" and baby in another moment was perched upon his shoulder and danced to its heart's content.

A week of unalloyed happiness followed. Flowers strewed the path of these youthful, untried hearts.

Ross carried the house by storm. It was he who planned amusements, fêtes, surprises. The carriage was at his command. "It never could be put to a better use," said Mr. Win-

field, as the happy faces passed him—and he sighed again; was it from very fulness of content, or was there in his heart an undefined sadness, a fear that this almost perfect happiness was soon to be rudely broken in upon? Whatever the reason, it was certain that some foreboding possessed his mind.

This kind of gay life suited Linda. She blossomed out into a gay little lady, parading all her new dresses, and was very indignant with her aunt Winfield because she interdicted the wearing of the most expensive, and the gaudiest colors. Linda had an astonishing wardrobe. She would have turned Cad's head, if that little busy bee's brain had been capable of such an atrocity. Poor Fanny sighed over the India mulls and painted muslins, and gossamer silks. She privately informed her mother that she thought Linda quite too young for such finery. Mrs. Winfield thought so too, but being judicious, she waited till she was sure of Linda's love before she counselled her.

Ross never tired of the nursery, big fellow as he was. He liked to see the little ones busy at their play.

"Kate, open shop for me," he said, one morning.

"Shop" was a small room over the nursery. Mr. Winfield had once been paid an old debt in dry goods, calicoes, cottons, braids, hosiery, linen, towelling, &c., which filled the shelves. Drawers underneath were furnished with spool-cotton, yarn, buttons, needles, &c., making a regular shop on a small scale.

Whenever Mrs. Winfield wished for material to make up for domestic purposes, Kate was sent to open shop. A nominal price was allowed for every article; she measured, gave change, and became in fact a practical shop-keeper. In a few months it would be Fanny's turn to superintend this little establishment. The money was kept in a small safe, and used partly as a charity fund. Fanny was assistant book-keeper, and even little Cad assisted in taking account of stock.

"There's a shop-keeping instinct in me," laughed Ross, looking round the shelves as they reached the shop. "I shall have to give up law—I shall indeed, and I told papa so yesterday."

"And what did he say?"

"Didn't seem to mind it much—said if I had no fancy for it, it would be useless to go in for it; what an uncommonly sensible man that dear father of ours is! I tell you what, Kate," he added, swinging himself up to the counter, "I should like to be a first-rate farmer. I always had a fancy, you know, for fussing over a garden, and that's the calling for me. I'm studying chemistry now, and that's a first-rate help to a fellow. Good farmers need such knowledge; in fact the better read a man is, the better farmer he is. I didn't like the city, it's full of misery and wretchedness; give me the country, Kate, with you to help manage a fellow."

"Dear me, how nice it would be," Kate dreamily murmured; "an old-fashioned house

in the country, a dairy, cows, hens and chickens—beautiful fields all shining with corn and wheat—fruit-orchards—I don't wonder at any one for wanting to be a farmer—but then," she added thoughtfully, "there's a great deal of dirty work about it."

"Not half as dirty as the law," said Ross, making a wry face. "One may get his hands or his linen soiled, but that's better than an ugly smutch on your conscience. I shouldn't like to hang a man by my special pleading, if he deserved it ever so much, or let a rascal go unwhipt of justice for the payment of an enormous fee. No, sir," he added, warming up, "I can't be a lawyer; I've no call to be a clergyman, and drugs I despise."

"You and I might live on a little farm together," said Kate, who mentally saw herself mistress of a fine, cool dairy, without in the least comprehending what its practical duties were likely to be.

"If father would only take a place in the country, somewhere, and give up business!"

"I wish he would," echoed Kate. "I don't think he looks quite well of late. I'm sure I see mamma watching him anxiously sometimes."

"He's the best father that ever a fellow had, I know that," cried Ross with great warmth.

Dusk was stealing into the little shop—a golden, lingering dusk, for the western sky hung thick with the richly tinted clouds of sunset. Kate and her brother went down into the nursery, where Linda was patiently undressing Felice, under the supervision of Cad, and Fanny was knitting some little fancy article for the toilet.

At length the week of play had come to an end. Sunday, filled in with pleasant duties and rare enjoyments, had closed, and the next sunrise would usher in the more prosaic cares of school-life.

On the Saturday preceding, Cad put the finishing touches to her household labors. Nurse Barton had kindly polished the stove for her; the carpet had been shaken, the tins

made to shine like bits of silver, and the whole kitchen was renovated.

It had been a novel thing to Linda, this playing at work, but she succeeded very well and did great credit to her patient little teacher. The business of scrubbing and scouring was lightened by her amusing stories of home, and even Ross lingered to listen to her merry descriptions of the water-bearers, the "men-washerwomen," as she gravely called them, the cooks who got up dinners on the streets, the turbaned coolies, the ayahs, the swinging hammocks, the noon-day siestas, and the grand dinners her father gave to the officers and state dignitaries.

"She's rather a nice little thing," Ross said to Fanny, "and seems to have plenty of money."

"Yes, uncle Harry is very rich, and she brought money with her. At first she wanted to buy every thing she saw, and papa had to limit her; she is not as ravenous now," Kate added, laughing.

Study was not pleasant to Linda. She never had liked books, she said, and forthwith began to assert her resolute will. She developed a capacity for mischief, and kept the study in a state of chronic unrest, making laughable pictures on her porcelain slate, and distorting her droll little countenance till she threw Phil and Cad into convulsions of suppressed laughter.

Mrs. Winfield turned her over to Ross, but she rebelled worse than before.

One day Cad and she were sent up stairs for some wilful misdemeanor. Cad felt herself disgraced, and retorted upon Linda.

"To think," she said with a sob, "you should come all the way from India to make me wicked!"

"Let's have a real good time, and not care," retorted Linda.

"But I do care, when I make my mamma unhappy," moaned Cad.

Linda sat silent for a moment, her little features working drolly.

"Truly and truly I can't help it," she said. "I guess Vishnu must be in me. He used to get in Burdg, dreadfully—he was papa's interpreter you know."

"Who is Vishnu?" queried Cad.

Linda put on a mysterious air.

"A dreadful god, who makes Hindoo people do awful things. I've got him in me as sure as you're alive. Burdg used to wear him, and he was made out of ivory."

Cad drew back shrinkingly.

"Then I'm afraid of you, and I wish you'd staid in India," she cried. Upon that Linda's face grew dark.

"I fancy Vishnu is very angry with you," she said, scowling, "and he just wants to make me slap you." She sprang towards Cad, who in trying to avoid her fell down, and Linda, to whom passion lent strength, dealt her a series of blows that might have done irreparable mischief if nurse Barton, attracted by the noise, had not rushed in at that moment and separated them. Then poor Linda, so long

untutored that she knew no self-restraint, threw herself upon the nurse with shrieks and contortions. Cad ran frightened down stairs to report the matter.

"Linda looked as if she was dying," she said; "her lips were all covered with foam, and she could scarcely breathe."

The girls were left in Ross's care, and Mrs. Winfield hurried up stairs, to find the poor child in convulsions, and Barton so frightened that she could not speak.

A week's illness followed, during which Cad moved round like a shadow, more miserable than she had ever been before. She was sometimes allowed to sit with the little invalid, but try hard as she would, she could not forget the wild gestures, the fearful name of Vishnu, the dilated eyes and foam-specked lips of her angry little cousin.

Linda herself seemed thoroughly ashamed of her misconduct, but excused herself by saying that papa never would let anybody contradict her.

"But don't you know it's dreadfully wicked to show such temper?" queried Cad.

"If people don't want me to show such temper, then they must let me have my own way," said Linda, complacently.

"But we don't always allow little folks to have their own way in this house," said Mrs. Winfield, as entering the room she heard the child's speech; and then she sat down in the darkened chamber and talked to her as she did to Cad and Fanny. The child was silent, her great dark eyes roving from object to object, and her fingers separating mechanically a string of amber beads with which she had been amusing herself. Cad had been sent down stairs.

"I'm sure Linda, you don't wish us to banish you to a house full of strangers, where the rules are strict and the punishments severe, rather than try and conquer this passionate temper of yours."

"Papa wants me to stay here," said Linda.

"Not unless we wish it, my dear. If you

are unwilling to do as we ask you, and make us all unhappy, we are at liberty to send you to school. Sometimes when people grow up with undisciplined tempers they commit great crimes, and people call them insane. They are insane when they give themselves up to such passions."

"But Cad was angry too."

"Cad was angry, no doubt; all my little girls forget themselves at times, and say and do what is wrong; but then they are taught to chain down that quick, fiery creature that springs up in their hearts; and they know that when they do wicked things, and say impertinent ones, they will never be restored to favor till they are thoroughly sorry, and say so too."

"Was Cad sorry, for that time?"

"Very sorry. She has told me so many times, with many tears. Indeed, I was afraid my poor little Cad would be sick too, she mourned so about it."

Linda's fingers had let the beads fall, and

were tracing the pattern of the quilt. She had heard something evidently quite new to her experience. That little window in her soul from which the curtain had never been lifted before, began to let in the light. She traced and thought, and thought and traced. The defiant spirit died hard.

"I wish I was back in India, with my own papa," she half sobbed, with quivering lips.

"But you are not back in India, my little one, and you are with people who will love you dearly, if you will only let them. In this house, you see, dear, the grown folks know more than the children, and they are accustomed to being obeyed. There can be no order and beauty unless certain rules are followed, and the little folks abide by them. During study hours, they must try to learn; if they are disobedient, they must be punished."

"Are you going to punish me?" quivered Linda.

"Don't you think you are already punished quite enough? Here you have been lying in

a dark room, with aching temples, while the other children have taken their walks and drives, and been happy down stairs. Do you think you need any more punishment, my poor little darling?"

"Yes, I do," sobbed Linda, breaking down, the cords of her throat and temples swelling with her grief; "I deserve to be sent right off to some horrid boarding-school. O dear, I didn't know that it was so wicked. I'll try to be a better girl, if you will only keep me here."

Mrs. Winfield gathered the trembling little-creature up in her loving arms, and rained kisses upon the wet eyes and flushed cheeks. This was what she had longed for, but almost despaired of hearing, and it warmed her heart to the very core. For a long time she sat there, talking in the sweet low voice of love, till Linda, her little dark face spiritualized, her eyes soft and shining, felt as if she had passed into a new condition,—that henceforth she should try to obey, because love required it.

Her little heart had been lifted for the first time to the dear Lord and Redeemer of little children, and Linda's spiritual life was beginning.

Mrs. Winfield went into the nursery. Cad was there.

"Go in and try to make little Linda happy," said her mother.





CHAPTER XII.

COMING SHADOWS.

"And in misfortune's dreary hour,
Or fortune's prosperous gale,
'Twill have a holy, cheering power,
There's no such word as *fail*."

PROPPED up by pillows, Linda was sitting on the bed when Cad came in beaming, her arms overflowing with dolls. In all directions their placid, painted faces peeped out, some at her throat, some at the back of her elbows, and some their heads, reversing the natural order of things, where their feet should have been. Soon Cad's boxes were spread out and her budget of finery arranged.

"You don't like dolls much, do you?" queried Cad.

"I was thinking," said Linda, her tones subdued, "Petkin is homely, isn't she; but she's good. Now these finely dressed dolls have everything they want, but you can't wash their faces with a real wash-rag; I suppose they get in a fearful passion, sometimes."

"O no—never!" said Cad, shaking her head decisively.

"Well, I wish they would; I wish they'd get in a raging, tearing passion—well—just so I could see myself," she added, humbly.

"I suppose they *might*," responded Cad, thoughtfully, looking at the matter in a new light. "I suppose if I began to shake them, and push and scold them—but no, that would be bad temper in me. Still, they might be unreasonable and get angry for nothing, as we do sometimes, you know."

"As we always do."

"No, not always; mamma says it is quite natural that we should want our own way sometimes, only we can't see as far as she can what would be good for us, and it must

be a real disappointment to us. That's why she teaches us to bear it patiently, and don't scold. And her saying that, and feeling bad for us, makes it a good deal easier to give up. Don't you see?"

Linda thought she did.

"Isn't your mamma elegant?" she cried:

Cad bent down and kissed the dark little face. In that most eloquent way she expressed her thanks. It was perfect rapture to hear her mother praised.

There came a fearful rap at the door, and then an avalanche of oranges as its was opened, and picture books, and a roll of candy.

"That's like boys!" said Cad, as Phil gave a whoop, Indian fashion, and was out of sight.

Phil means all these for you; but what a queer way of doing it!"

And this was Linda's lesson. She went down stairs a few days afterwards, determined to be good; but she found out what older people than she are sometimes a long time

learning, that it was only a step at a time, and not a sudden spring into reformation.

And now something occurred that robbed home of much of its beauty. The children met as usual in the general play-room, but the father was often absent. To be sure, Ross threw his slender proportions on the great lounge, after his father's fashion, but nobody felt that he filled his father's place. They missed the hearty laugh, the cheery, grown-up voice. Mrs. Winfield wore an anxious expression. What did it mean? what could be going to happen?

Kate and Ross had many private little talks about it, as they worked over their new aquarium. See-weed and shells, and pure white sand formed the basis of this novel home for fishes, and Ross had built quite a marine castle of bits of coral and stone.

"No, I really don't understand why papa should be absent so much," said Ross. "You see I put these pieces of looking-glass in the back of the case, to enlarge the view. Do

you remember what uncle wrote us about the great Paris aquarium, where the light was arranged so as to fall over large mirrors inserted as panels, and one seemed to look out into the caverns under the sea. They gave the effect of space. There! now we'll get some of those gelatinous fish, rose-colored, that look so like lovely flowers—some gold fish, and they, with the tadpoles and the crab, will make our collection one not to be despised, I can tell you."

"There's trouble somewhere," said Kate, after assenting to her brother's speech, "for I heard father say that he should hate most of all to give up the house, but for the sake of his creditors he supposed it must be done."

"Why, Kate!" exclaimed Ross, his work losing all its interest, "does it mean that father is going to fail, I wonder? That would be dreadful!"

"I'm afraid it does," replied Kate.



CHAPTER XIII.

THE NEWS.

"A country lad is my degree,
And few there are that ken me O."

"**I** AM not going back to college, that's settled," said Ross on the following day.

"Are you sorry?" asked Kate, who seemed a shade older and quieter.

Cad and Linda were as busy as they could be in the kitchen; Fanny had gone out to walk with nurse and the baby.

"Sorry! what a question; why, if it wasn't for one thing and another, I should be perfectly happy. I'm sorry for father; but he don't consider himself badly off, he says, since he finds that he can pay every cent on the dollar."

"But it seems such a dreadful thing to be poor, such a dreadful thing to fail! We never have been poor, you know."

"That's nonsense," said Ross, with more energy than grace. "Nobody is poor who is strong and willing to work; that's the way I look at it. One of our boys at college lost a fortune he never had; I mean his uncle had made him his heir, and was supposed to be a very rich man, but he died insolvent. You'd have thought Ned—it was Ned Barker—had lost every friend and every prospect in life. He went about like a whipped puppy, ears down. There wasn't a fellow in the school didn't despise him; you should have heard him talk of his damaged prospects, after he had been drinking pretty freely. What kind of a fellow is that to get through the world? I'd throw down books and go shovel, if I was actually afraid of poverty."

Kate listened, and her spirits began to rise.

"On the whole, it's not a bad thing to be dependent on your muscle," continued Ross,

planting his feet more firmly, and throwing back his handsome head. "A spade is better than dumb-bells; carting gravel is quite as wholesome as lifting twice one's weight."

"Do you suppose every thing will have to be sold?" queried Kate, as she sewed her long white seam. It is curious how one bright face will brighten another. Kate was quite eager to make the best of circumstances now.

Shouldn't wonder," was Ross's reply.

"Where shall we go?"

"It's not decided yet. My vote, if it is worth counting, shall be put in for the country. I'm after a bit of land to farm, you see; to study my profession."

"Suppose we should have to do without servants?"

"Well, suppose we do with fewer?" said Ross. "We can dispense with John, though wont the old fellow take it hard? Fan can play nurse. She likes Prince Charlie enough to tend him from morning till night, though when it comes to "have to," it sometimes

makes a difference. Don't worry, Kate; it won't take papa long to get his head above water again; and it wasn't his fault that he failed, it's all the other firm's. I don't believe father has ever set his heart on riches; he's too much of a Christian for that."

Cad's voice sounded in a little nursery roundelay.

"The dear little girl!" exclaimed Ross; "she must have silver wings, somewhere—always so contented with humble duties. If Cad were only older, she'd be chief cook and bottle-washer, and enjoy it too, I thoroughly believe."

"What will be done with Linda?" asked Kate, anxiously.

Ross looked grave.

"She may have to be sent to boarding-school."

"I don't believe mamma will let her go," said Kate, sagely; "it would be a pity; she is just forming her mind, you know."

Ross laughed.

"I wonder what shape it will take? I suppose uncle Harry could set father up again, but he'll never know it, not from papa. I don't think he'd let himself be helped."

"Does papa know we know it?"

"I suppose so; he hasn't tried to keep it a secret."

At that moment Mrs. Winfield came into the nursery. Kate watched her anxiously, but she wore the same cheerful countenance, only her face was a shade paler. She busied herself for a moment, flitting from table to closet in the sunshine, then exchanging a pleasant word with Ross, she went out again.

Ross went and stood opposite the pictured face of his own mother.

"I was thinking," he said, as Kate's eye caught his, "how happy our own sweet mother must be, if some one has told her in her beautiful home how well her place is filled. Kate, isn't she a darling, that mother of our's? Some women at the prospect of leaving such

a home as this, would go round as glum and sour—especially if she wasn't our own mother."

Kate's eyes shone through tears.

"Indeed she is a darling," she murmured, and the words came from a full heart.

"That evening Mr. Winfield returned early. All the family were expectant and anxious, even Phil looked grave.

Cad and Linda sat apart from the rest, both very busy over the pattern of a new dress for Petkin. Cad had bought the calico that afternoon at the shop.

"Well, children, I suppose you have heard the news," said Mr. Winfield, as the elder ones drew up in a circle near him.

Their faces answered him.

"You don't look very unhappy."

They all broke into smiles.

"Thank God for that—and thank God that it will not touch my honor," he said, much moved; "that makes me a happy man. But, children, we shall be obliged to give

up some of the luxuries to which we have been accustomed."

"We are all ready to do that," said Ross.

"Thank you, my boy, and how about college? Your mother and myself think that with the exercise of strict economy, we can still take you through the remaining two years."

"If it's all the same to you, sir," said the boy, reddening a little, "I had rather leave college, and do my part towards helping support the family."

Mr. Winfield's lip trembled.

"Isn't he splendid?" thought Kate, surveying her hero with kindling eyes.

"Just as you say, my boy," his father replied, recovering his self-possession. "As long as you have a distaste for the profession I should have chosen for you, you can do as you choose about going back. Now your mother has something to say."

They all turned towards her. Cad was already at her feet, having brought cushion-

work and all, to nestle near her "angel," as she often called her mother,

"You have heard, dears, that I have a little home of my own," she said in a soft, clear voice, "in the western part of the state. It is a stone house, quite pleasantly situated on rising land, and surrounded by delightful scenery. It stands at the base of a mountain, from which it takes its name. We call it Redbow."

"How beautiful!" cried Cad. "Dear me, I must tell Petkin about it. I hope there are no Indians there."

"No, darling, the Indians by whom it is supposed the mountain was named, are all gone, long ago."

"Away off in the country," said Cad, in disappointed tones; stretches of lovely fields and no shop-windows with ribbons in them presenting themselves to her vision.

"Yes, dear, quite in the country, you must make up your mind to that—miles from any other farm."

"Father, you are welcome to my hundred dollars," said Phil, in a hoarse whisper, when he had reached a proximity from where he could be heard; and his father's smile, as he looked down upon him, was worth more to the boy than a good many hundred dollars. Phil sidled away, red as a turkey in the face, but with a strange happiness in his heart.

"I say, is there any place for fishing?" he asked, as he neared Mrs. Winfield again.

"A grand old river, full of trout," replied his mother, smiling.

"Then hurrah for trout! and my new patent fly. Three cheers for Redbow—I'm glad we're poor!"

A general laugh sent Phil behind the globes.





CHAPTER XIV.

A TALK ABOUT IT.

"Let not one look of Fortune cast you down,
She were not Fortune if she did not frown."

"**A**RE we going into the country?" whispered Linda, who had watched proceedings thus far with curious eyes.

"Yes, indeed; won't it be el-e-gant? We can carry our dolls into the woods and dress them. I'll have my kitchen under a big shady tree. Aint you glad?"

"I guess so," said Linda, with some hesitation.

"The house is not as spacious as this one," said Mrs. Winfield, resuming the subject, "but there are two or three quite large rooms.

It was left by my great-aunt just as it stands, very plain and old-fashioned in its furnishing. But satin chairs and fine upholstery are not necessary to our happiness," she added, with a smile.

"I should think not," Ross responded. "What do we care for our fine drawing-room across the hall? Even company always brings up in this nice old place; nobody'll miss the extra touches."

"Then we can turn Redbow parlor into a sitting-room, and enjoy it," said Mrs. Winfield. "I dare say we shall like it quite as well as this, after a while."

"Let's have the nursery out-doors," proposed Cad, "then there'll be lots of room."

"And a general nursery, as aunt Chloë says, when winter comes," said Ross, when the laugh at Cad's expense had subsided.

"It's a dear old rocky, woodsey, breezy, comfortable place," continued the mother, "and that's all it is. When I was a child, I was never so happy as at Redbow. I can

smell its old oven, full of baked sweet pears, now."

"Then there must be fruit," said, Kate.

"Plenty, of all kinds. There's a wilderness of red currants, and a hedge-fence of white ones. Then there are raspberries, strawberries, blackberries and dewberries, all in their season. Better pears, apples and peaches, never grew—besides grapes of every variety."

"I don't see but what you propose to transport us to paradise," laughed Mr. Winfield.

"Plenty of land, I suppose," said Ross.

"Only forty acres—nearly ten cultivated."

Ross pressed his lips together, and his eyes sparkled. To him all the pleasures of life were compressed into that one word, farming.

"Cows and pigs, and that sort of thing," said Cad.

"Cows, certainly, I hope," said her mother.

"The persons who hire the place at present, own all the stock."

"We'll buy it all," said Cad. "There's plenty of money in the shop."

Cad meant their shop up stairs.

"Our best way will be to decide upon what furniture to send up," said Mr. Winfield. "Tomorrow is the first of May; the sale will take place on the tenth. I don't care about staying till the red flag is hung from the window."

"Dear me, if we are to go so soon, what shall I do?" said Cad, in a perplexed voice. "Petkin must have her new dress finished, and several of the others need new suits."

"How about Linda?" asked Mr. Winfield, in a lower voice. "I don't know that we should compel her to share our altered fortunes. Perhaps I ought to find her a good boarding-school."

"O, papa! don't, don't!" cried a little voice sharpened by terror.

It was Linda. She had never called him "papa" before, and this little lapse touched his heart.

"Then you will go into the wilderness with us, birdie?"

"Yes, indeed, anywhere; don't send me away. I should break my heart without Cad. And papa would say so; he wants me to learn to be good."

Another moment and she was folded in the motherly arms of Mrs. Winfield.

"I couldn't have let you go, birdie," she said. "There, there—don't cry," as Linda hid her wet eyes on her bosom; "it is all decided, and our little girl is to stay with us."

Next came the choice of furniture; each child had the privilege of selecting some portion. Ross wanted the sitting-room tables and desks, and the handsome red easy chairs in the parlor. Kate chose the piano, music racks and stool, and might she petition for their pretty nursery carpet?

The carpet was vetoed, reluctantly, by Mr. Winfield. He didn't believe in carpets, and never had. Fanny suggested the shop, and that was considered sensible.

"What will we do for dress-makers?" she asked aside, ruefully.

"Import two or three dozen," said Ross.

"We can make all our own dresses," said Kate.

"Just as I do for my babies," echoed Cad, cutting away on her small lap-board.

"Well, little folks, any thing else?" asked papa, after a pause.

"All the books," said Ross.

"The best of them," said his father.

"We must manage it to take our nurse, I think," said Mrs. Winfield. "The good soul says she will go on less wages because she is so much attached to the children. I believe the only thing she regrets leaving behind, is St. Mary's and its chimes."

"Reminds her of hold Hengland," muttered Ross.

"As to other servants, we must wait awhile. There are two nice old people on the place, who have lived there rent-free for years. Martha Primrose used to be a smart woman."

"I'll wash and iron all the little things," said Cad, confidently.

"Poor child," laughed her mother, "you don't know what you bargain for. All the little things, means the largest and most responsible part of the work. We must spare your willing little fingers yet awhile."

"Ross," said Mr. Winfield, coming out of a reverie, "I appoint you teacher and tutor in chief, till we get settled. It won't do to have our little folks running wild, and mother has her hands full-enough at present."

"I'll take the responsibility," replied Ross, squaring his shoulders.

"Where's Phil, all this time?" queried Kate.

"Fast asleep behind the western hemisphere," replied Fanny. "I think *he* ought to live in the country and go to roost with the chickens."

No one would have thought, looking round that brilliant room, with its busts, pictures, and plants, and cheerful fire and sunny faces;

listening to the merriment of happy voices, the merry laugh, the steady tones—that misfortune had overtaken them, and that this princely home would soon be no longer a shelter and a temple for them.

Mr. Winfield alone was thoughtful. It was no light thing to break away from these charming associations after thirty years of unbroken prosperity; but at the same time he had learned not to set his heart on riches, and though cast down, he was not discouraged. He was still a young man, comparatively, and the world was all before him.

Meantime the children indulged in the most pleasing anticipations. Mamma was besieged with questions as to the position, surroundings and possibilities of Redbow. Every room, nook and corner were accurately described; its paths, its garden, its walks, its roads.





CHAPTER XV.

BREAD AND HONEY.

"The daily labors of the bee
Awake my soul to industry;
Who can observe the careful ant,
And not provide for future want?"



LULL of business was Cad's little head. How she should pack her cooking-stove and all the utensils, how she should secure her dolls and her games, and where she should put them when she reached Redbow, sadly perplexed her busy little faculties.

"For you see, Linda, there's no dear old nursery at Redbow, and what shall I do for places to put things?"

"May-be there's a shed," Linda.

"But my things are too nice for a shed,"

responded Cad. "Why, Felice would catch her death in such a place; besides, she's been used to elegance all her life."

"You might keep her in the parlor, shut up in a closet," said Linda, who, although Felice had become her property, always seemed to consider that Cad was best entitled to the ownership.

"Would you have me break her heart?"

"She hasn't got any heart," said practical Linda.

"What! my Felice? No heart! and come from Paris?" cried Cad, aghast. "You don't know dolls as well as I do, or you'd never say that."

"How can she have a heart, if she's stuffed full of saw-dust?"

"That's only bones and muscles and blood-vessels," retorted Cad. "The heart is something entirely different; do you suppose I could love children without hearts? I guess you'd better not talk of things you don't understand," she added sagely, dismissing

the subject; as many a more able philosopher does, when the questions get too difficult.

Fanny was busy with her beloved fancy work. She had designed a new pattern for a tidy, and was very proud of it. Kate looked over it admiringly.

"You have such taste!" she said; "what a beautiful stitch!"

"Yes, I suppose I shall have plenty of time for this sort of thing at Redbow—hateful place!" answered Fanny.

"Why, Fanny dear!" Kate exclaimed, surprised at her sister's tone, "I thought you liked it."

"Like it! It gives me the chills whenever I think of it. We shall be so lonesome!" quivered Fanny, ready to cry. "And then think what dowdies we shall grow to be, just like all country people, making our dresses, and bonnets, and wearing hen feathers, perhaps, instead of real ostrich!"

"How absurd!" Kate exclaimed, laughing.

"You don't care—anything contents you,"

said Fanny impatiently; "but I'm different. I like our drives, and to see folks. I hate to leave my friends, and of course the girls I know will never come to Redbow. I'm afraid of the long, lonely winters, when the snow is piled up outside. I shall miss the sights and the shop-windows, and going out to buy things, and meeting acquaintances, and going to parties—there'll be an end of all that."

"But there are the woods, the hills, the flowers, the rivers—what do we want of acquaintances? Won't it be more delightful to find wild flowers and botanize, than to buy stupid ribbons—though to be sure ribbons are very good in their place, and when we want fresh ones we can get them somehow. Even in winter there'll be no end of fun, and sleigh rides—plenty of ponds for skating—and we have our nice skating dresses. Only think of the fruit, and the clear air in summer, and all out-doors, as Cad says, to enjoy ourselves in?"

Fanny still looked rueful. She was more

worldly than Kate, and clung to the city and ribbons. She could not help it that her inclinations were different, that they tended towards excitement and variety; she was not really to blame that she had no enthusiastic love for the country, but it was clearly her duty to try and bear with fortitude the changes imposed upon her.

Meantime cheerful, sunshiny Cad, gave a good-night confidential talk to all her dolls, telling them that they were soon to go to a new home—Linda sitting by, quite willing, in the joy of her heart that she was not to be sent away, to believe that they had ears that could hear, and eyes that could see.

“You just belong to us now,” said Cad, kissing Linda and giving her a hug; “and you won’t mind being poor a bit, will you?”

“Not one bit,” replied Linda, who had no more idea of what poverty could be, than the canary that cradled its head under its feathers in the cage in the nursery window.

“I guess you’d even eat bread without

butter, and stay with us, if we couldn't get any butter."

"Yes," replied Linda, complacently, "I'd quite as lief have honey;" and the two little girls went very lovingly arm in arm to their bedroom.

Fanny could not sleep that night, thinking over the strange events of the few past days. To her fertile imagination it seemed as if they had been suddenly stripped of all that could make life desirable. She could not, like Linda, fancy even honey taking the place of butter. As for ribbons, they were, doubtless, things of the past, but she should keep and cherish her little store for the sake of old times.

It was easier to feel reconciled when talking with Kate. When alone by herself, a look into the future appalled her, it was so dark. She wondered if Kate was asleep, and getting up, stole to the door.

There was a dim light in the nursery; nurse Barton was kneeling down at the end of the

room at her prayers. She looked up and called:-

"Who's there?"

"It's only I, nurse," said Fanny. "I'm going to speak to Kate."

"Dear laws! if I didn't think it was a real spook, miss!" said the nurse, to Fanny's great amusement.

She went to Kate's door and stole softly in. Kate was prepared for her coming, having heard her voice. She, too, had been lying awake, watching the moon and thinking.

"Kate, are you asleep?" whispered Fanny.

"No; I'm wide awake," said Kate.

"Are you nervous?"

"Not a bit."

"I am, so I came in here to have a talk."

"We ought both to be asleep by this time," said conscientious Kate.

"I know it, but if one can't, how can one?"

Kate laughed.

"Sure enough," she said.

"I'll just sit here a moment in your old rocking-chair. How beautiful the moon is!"

"Yes, I was just thinking how lovely Redbow must look!"

"Redbow! I haven't even tried to think how it looks. I tell you, though, it's a coarse old country house, with low ceilings and plastered walls. O dear, how I shall miss everything nice! It makes my heart ache; who will there be to associate with?"

"I was in hopes you had got over those doleful fancies," said Kate.

"No, they keep coming, like so many crows. Only think, Kate, no carriage—actually, no carriage—and we have been used to that all our lives. It seems to me papa had no business to fail."

"O! Fanny—poor papa! when it was not his fault, either."

Fanny did not answer. She threw her arms over her knees, and back-locked her fingers, a way girls have, so that she cut a queer figure in the bright moonlight, with her

sad face and long white robe. Kate smiled as she looked at her, saying to herself, "Fanny wouldn't like to have her picture taken now."

"Everybody will cut us," pursued poor Fanny, dolefully. "You know that's what they call it, when folks don't notice you."

"But we shan't see them, Fanny dear, and who cares?"

"I do," murmured the disconsolate. "I don't want to grow up a great overgrown country girl, with my hands all knuckles, and my face all freckles. I like to be graceful and nice and lady-like," she added, the tears coming to her eyes. "Redbow sounds just like a dreadful savage place, full of pigs and cows and mud. I do wish somebody would adopt me, and keep me here."

"Little Miss Nightcap," said a laughing voice, "hadn't you better go to bed?"

Fanny sprang up with a cry. There stood her mother.

Fanny wanted the floor to open just then, she was so overwhelmed with the fear that

have said, but more than delighted that the Winfields were coming.

"It will be as it was in the old time," she said to herself, over and over again; "there will be a lady in Redbow."

Mrs. Primrose was a little woman, and a cheerful one. Her apple-round, wrinkled old face, knew how to shine and smile, as heart-somely as a girl of sixteen. She wore the quaintest and daintiest high-crowned caps, as stiff and white as clapping and starch could make them, and an old-fashioned dimity 'kerchief, in the form of a triangle, over her still plump shoulders.

Father Primrose was a trifle slower, and a trifle stouter. It took him longer to get round than it did his wife, but then he was ten years older, and at seventy a man don't like to be hurried. Both of the Primroses were good-natured easy-going people, given to pets and petting, but they petted each other most of all. A dozen times a day mother Primrose would say:

"Father, hadn't you better sit down and rest a little?" or, "take a bite and a sup, my dear?"

Or, father Primrose would say:-

"Mother, be kerful of your steps; take it easy, mother, take it easy."

He was saying that just now, as mother Primrose, her cap-strings flying, went over the house with her quick tripping walk.

"Yes, father, but things must be done before night, and that great hamper to be unloaded. Mr. Winfield isn't an infidel, if we can judge by the provisions he's sent for his family. Laws! there's chickens, and ham, and tongue, and tea and sugar, and everything to be put away, and the table to be set. I suppose they'll bring the furniter with 'em; the letter said so."

"They can't git much more furniter in here, I should judge," said father Primrose, leisurely seating himself in the dining-room, as mother Primrose laid the tea-table.

"Won't you have a bite and a sup, father?"

asked Mrs. Primrose, evening the corners of the cloth.

"No, thankee, wife, I ain't a hankering arter vittles now. I'm thinking, if old Miss Lotty was alive, she'd be glad to see the change."

"Dear, dear, wouldn't she?" returned his bustling wife, "and the sweetest thing were Miss Lotty's niece, as I remember. Depend upon it, she's growed into a full-blown lady. I can see her now, dear little creeter, her ways that demure and sober she seemed like a little woman then, for the poor little thing hadn't no children to play with. Miss Lotty was old-maidish and partickler in her ways, didn't know how to do for children, but the sweet child didn't seem to need no playthings, though I'd cut her out corn-stalk popguns, myself. She'd be as happy with an apron full o' flowers, or a kitten, or a chicken, as some with a houseful o' toys. She was allays a happy creeter, and I guess she's a happy creeter to this day."

"Well, well, we shall hev children enough here now, to suit you, dame," said father Primrose.

"Bless 'em," murmured mother Primrose softly.

"Do you hear *that*, mother Primrose?"

The good woman dropped a saucer.

"The old clock a striking?"

"No, the whistle, the car-whistle, a good two mile off."

"Yes, I do, now—your ears allays was quicker than mine. Going down to the corner? You'll have a bite and a sup first, wont you, father?"

"Well, well, I don't care—some cheese and doughnuts."

"And a cup o' tea," said the dame, tripping away.

Take it easy, mother, take it easy," the old man called after her.

Meantime the little depot at Campbell's Grove, as the place was named, presented a scene of unusual excitement. A few coun-

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try men and maidens, who had come down to see the train off, gazed with round-eyed amazement at the great bales and boxes that quite filled the area in the rear of the little wooden station.

O how fragrant the air was with resinous gums and the odor of the pine-trees! The birds twittered from all their leafy palaces, the squirrels ran up and down the trunks of great, sleepy looking trees. Green and gold beetles came out into the warm sunshine.

Prince Charlie slept very sweetly in nurse Barton's arms, Mrs. Winfield and Kate were talking together. Phil stood apart, with his thumbs in his vest-pocket, hugging an enormous fishing-rod. Phil was speculating on the possibilities of trout for supper.

Cad and Linda wandered about in the cool, green grass, keeping the depot in sight, and oh-ing and ah-ing at every stick and shrub. Ross was with his father, looking over the parcels as the train steamed off. Fanny alone seemed weary and dispirited.

"O, Fanny," cried Cad in jubilant tones, "here's the sweetest little thing! O, do come and see."

Fanny hastened to see, shuddered, and ran back to nurse Barton's side.

It was a toad, but seen through happy eyes, the little creature was quite beautiful.

"Isn't it *de-licious*?" cried Cad; "is it any thing like India?"

"O, no; the trees are taller; they are full of flowers, too."

"Do you see that nice dark place there?" asked Cad. "Only suppose uncle Harry should pop out right upon us."

"And stay with us," cried Linda, "at Redbow, and bring thousands and thousands of rupees."

"And *el-e-gant* shawls and dresses for you and me."

"Yes, and diamonds, and a great white elephant, with gold fringe on his saddle."

"Did you ever ride on an elephant?" asked Cad.

"Yes, indeed."

"A true elephant?"

"True as true can be; papa was in the saddle, and I was in papa's lap. It was like being on a mountain—no, like ship-sailing, but I liked it."

"Come, children," called papa, as a large wagon drove up, "we must pack close, this is our carriage."

"Isn't it fun?" cried Cad, as they drove by the sweet-scented hayfields and wild-rose hedges. "I wouldn't go back to the city again if I could, would you, Fanny?"

Fanny looked down, and twisted her parasol.

"Never mind 'Fan," said Ross, "we'll send for some of our stylish acquaintances to come out and pay us a visit."

Poor Fanny! Ross had blundered, as boys will, and the tears began to flow. Mrs. Winfield called the attention of the little party away from her to some tall elm-trees, under which several cows were standing.

"What a picture!" cried Ross; "I'd like to roll in that grass."

"You'll have plenty to roll in before you get through, my boy," said Mr. Winfield, who had been unwontedly silent.

"I wonder if we shall know Redbow?" queried Kate.

"O jolly! there's a river!" shouted Phil, pulling at his fishing-rod. "Let me get out, can't I get out?"

"No, Phil, we shall be home soon," said Mrs. Winfield, looking about her with happy smiles. "I remember the road; we have only to turn that corner, and, as the tourists say, Redbow will burst upon your view, in all its magnificence."

They were going up hill now. At their left, a little village seemed to hang from the cliffs below, enveloped in a soft, golden haze. Grand old Redbow, a veritable mountain, such as the children had never seen before, raised its serene brow against the deep, rich blue of the heavens. At their right rose terrace after

terrace of well cultivated land—a sinuous ribbon of a river flowing through the deep sea-green of distant fields.

A cry of delight, echoed even by Fanny, whose eyes were still wet, sounded on the quiet air.

“Redbow is beautiful!” exclaimed Ross, standing up. “Hurrah! I’m glad. There’s a real lawn in front, shaded by such splendid old trees. We’ll make an Eden of it, father.”

They had turned the corner, Redbow still before them, and there stood the gray old house, with its deep porch, old-fashioned, low-arched windows, its flowering vines and cool, dark interior. There were flower beds everywhere, and crocusses bursting into bloom in rows of golden light. A side porch, a tower at the west corner, a great, solid, roomy bay window, made the house exceedingly attractive.

“It stands just as I remember it,” said Mrs. Winfield in a low voice, “and the orchards are as beautiful as ever.”



CHAPTER XVII.

REDBOW.

"The trees are full of crimson buds,
The woods are full of birds,
And the waters flow to music,
Like a tune with pleasant words."

"**W**ELL, I never did! why Miss Alice,
how do you do?"

It was worth something, Kate thought, to be welcomed by that peach-cheeked old lady, who stood smiling just inside the porch.

"And that's your baby—your baby, that used to be a baby here, yourself! Well, I never did! But welcome to Redbow, sweet hearts, one and all. I've been getting ready ever since yesterday."

"I don't see that you are altered any, Mrs.

Primrose," said Mrs. Winfield, tears of joy in her gentle eyes.

"Well, I don't know; father he calls me 'sweet sixteen,' sometimes. The fact is, I ain't going to grow any older'n I can help, bless you, deary. Nothin' troubles me but the jints, and that's rheumatiz. But come right in. What a lovely family! Well, your lines is fallen in pleasant places, I should think. And that's your husband, seein' to things out there—what a fine, handsome gentleman, to be sure. I should say you ought to be a happy woman."

"I am a happy woman, Mrs. Primrose," said Mrs. Winfield, following the cheerful old lady into the dining-room. Nurse Barton had already stowed the baby on a lounge, and the children were helping each other off with their travelling gear, as Mrs. Primrose called it.

That fine old lady fell in love with the whole family, at once. Cad and Linda were the sweetest little fairies; Fanny a ladyish

sort of child, and Kate was quite beyond praise.

Dinner was ready, as Mrs. Winfield had expected. She knew Mrs. Primrose of old. The dining-room was not as spacious as the one they had been accustomed to, but it was a pleasant, cosy place, and the crimson light of a crackling wood-fire made it quite as beautiful. It was a great pleasure to see Mrs. Primrose, with her handsome cap and genial manners, handing the dishes around, instead of solemn, ponderous John.

After dinner, Kate and Fanny prepared for a tour of inspection over the premises. The wide, cool hall that divided the parlor from the dining-room could not have been pleasanter. It had a delightful outlook on garden and sloping fields, and old Redbow. The parlor was spacious, extending the whole length of the house. It seemed rather shabby to girls fresh from a home filled with luxuries, with its faded carpet and plain, upright furniture, placed primly against the wall.

"It's not one bit like our dear old room, though," said Fanny, choking a little.

"Not with this poor furniture; but remember how much we have brought with us, and what a home-look it will give. See this splendid great bay-window, Fanny dear; why it's a little room by itself. And there's the great oval, mamma told us about—that grand window, covered by that horrid curtain; what taste! O, Fanny, this view is perfectly sublime! How can you sigh for the city, after that?"

Kate had not exaggerated in the least, the view was really sublime.

There had been a shower the night before, and all the rocks glistened in brown and amber, while the shelving snow, still melting in the crevices, was oddly veined with green and yellow. In the distance the swollen, winding river, went goldenly in and out along its marshy borders.

On the right, stretched a forest, its sombre depth crowned with a younger, livelier growth

of green, and silvered by ragged fringes of mist slowly rolling away.

To the left, hemmed in by softly undulating hills, and steaming with vapor that in the sunlight took on a thousand hues, were sloping fields, level meadows, and picturesque upland rich with pastures, over which faint pink shadows wavered and fell.

Right before them rose old Redbow, rare old mountain, full of deep chasms, that seemed to have been splashed with mighty masses of crimson and amber, down which the arbutus trailed; full of ledges and gorges, and awful steps that none but a giant could mount. Here and there dripped water white as foam, and its bald face seemed graven with a thousand mysteries. It stood there like a king of the ages, hoary with the grand inscriptions of time.

"Did you ever see any thing like that?" asked Kate, drawing a deep breath.

"It's all very splendid, of course," said, or rather sighed Fanny; "but some way I can't feel as interested as I ought to. Well," she

added, a moment after, "mother says it is possible to overcome, so, I suppose I must overcome my regrets for the blessed old home."

"Of course, we all miss that, dear; still, I don't believe but you will be as happy as a kitten in a week. You know how kittens fret in strange places, but give them plenty of milk, and stroke them the right way," she added, laughingly, smoothing Fanny's bright hair, "and they get wonted to their new quarters; so will you, dear. Come, let's go up stairs."

They ran up the winding stairway, which was of itself a picture of quaint oaken carving, and came upon a wide landing that had more the appearance of a room than a hall. It was hung with curious pictures, whose frames were brown with age. The windows at either end were set deep in the heavy walls, leaving wide, low seats for loungers. In one corner a stuffed white owl looked unutterable wisdom from his rustic perch. A pair of antlers curved grace-

ful outlines over each door, and the same glorious outlook on old Redbow satisfied the beauty-loving senses.

"I feel just as if I could live here forever!" cried Kate, in rapturous tones.

"Mother's room," with its neat furniture and snowy bed-linen came first; then two cosy little nests, light, bright and comfortable, with long wardrobes of fragrant cedar let into the walls, and cosy niches, and mediæval windows and tasteful surroundings.

The rooms opposite were set aside for study, guest-chamber and nursery, and that was the extent of the household accommodations. I must not forget the long, low, ceiled garret, running the whole length of the house, that had never been finished, and that for nearly a century had been the receptacle for broken furniture, old-chests, and all the rubbish that, accumulating with years, seems to some sensitive minds too precious to be destroyed utterly.

By the time they had quite finished, Fanny

had become more reconciled to her new quarters, especially when Prince Charlie, in one of his rare moods of fretfulness, consented to be soothed by no hand but her's.

"Suppose," whispered Kate, with a grave face, "that instead of losing our dear old home we had lost him."

Fanny said nothing, but held the beautiful child with a firmer clasp.

"Yes, or it might have been papa. I will try and be contented."





CHAPTER XVIII.

CAD'S NEW PLAYHOUSE.

"Miss Moppet had her little house,
Of rooms that counted four;
Miss Moppet swept her little house,
And then she washed the floor."



S may be supposed, the younger scions of the Winfield house, Cad and Linda, were by no means idle, as soon as they had been given liberty to peep about.

"Wherever I shall have my play-house," Cad cried in despair, "I'm sure I cannot tell."

They explored the barnyard, and left it quite impressed with the idea that pig-pens were not genteel appurtenances. Not so with the cows, however, with two of which they fell desperately in love, as, slowly ruminating in an adjoining pasture, they looked with

their calm, large eyes, the very ideal of milky motherhood. Every breath of air smelt of wild roots and vines, sweet clover, honeysuckles and hedge-roses, and hundreds of homely little blooms of color. They knelt down in the tall grass, and let its cool thin waves sweep over their faces, they gathered armfuls of curious blossoms, and then threw them aside for new wonders.

At last they found their way into the empty barn, still redolent of last year's treasures. A wonderful white hen resented their boisterous incoming, while her brood of downy chicks sped for shelter under her feather-roof, at the sound.

"Don't it smell delicious here?" said Linda, "and how slippery the floor is! Let's slide."

Sliding proved to be hard work. It was pleasanter to stand where the long, slant sunbeams goldened the great space with tiny motes, resplendent as diamonds, swimming in their light, and watch the strange reflection on each other's face.

Presently they espied a staircase.

"I wonder what there is up there?" queried Linda.

"Let's go and see."

"No;" Linda shrank away. "I'm afraid."

"Afraid of what?"

"I don't know," whispered the child, turning her little brown face aside.

"None but wicked people ever need to be afraid," said Cad, solemnly; "you have heard me say that repeatedly to Petkin. Petkin goes everywhere in the dark."

"Petkin hasn't got eyes; and besides, you go with her," retorted matter-of-fact Linda.

"It's no use for you to say that Petkin's got no eyes," said Linda, seating herself on the third step; "because she always sees with my eyes; and besides, I can go with you up these stairs; now what do you say? Your Ayah, or whatever she called herself, ought to be ashamed of telling you stories about Vishnu and the bogies; and now you're in a Christian family, you ought to be ashamed to be afraid

of them. Don't you know the dear Lord, who loves little children, is above all, and watches every step you take? O! my goodness, there's an awful big spider coming right down on my head!" and Cad's moralizing was thrown to the winds until both had reached the door, and stood panting and laughing.

Cad was quite ashamed of her fright in a moment, however, and with a long stick bravely attacked his spidership, and then as bravely mounted the stairs.

"O, Linda," she cried, "come up; I see the sun through the keyhole. You needn't be a bit afraid, its light and pleasant here."

Linda ran up, still trembling a little. It was light and pleasant, now that Cad held the door open.

"A real room—a charming room, with a chair, and a little old lounge, and a table, and a bit of rag-carpet—and—O, Linda—a stove! Won't we be made up now for housekeeping? I'll ask mamma to let me bring all my playthings here. Won't the children be

delighted? Petkin will go wild. It's even better than the old nursery, I think, because we can fix up and contrive things, and have it all our own way. You see, Fanny won't be here to scold, or Kate to look so *womanish*, as if we were little children; and O, Linda, what washes we will get out! My things will furnish sweetly, and Ross can make us some shelves. O, dear, dear me, I am *so* happy! give me one good hug, Linda; now ain't you glad we came?"

Linda confessed she was, with a little sigh of content, as she seated herself on the lounge—"Only," she added, "I wish we could keep it a secret."

"Why?"

"Phil will plague us."

"Perhaps we haven't been kind enough to Phil," said philosophic Cad, who in her present mood could have forgiven the whole world. "When he comes in sight, you know, we stop play, as if he was a monster. Mamma says Phil is our cross, and

you know we must bear crosses bravely. Besides, I mean to just ask him to help us do something whenever he comes, and that'll send him off. And then Ross is here, and Phil isn't half so rude when he is round. Wasn't it awful, though, when he hung Pet-kin? The life was almost gone out of her precious body. But I guess he's got a good heart—papa says so."

A voice was heard outside, shouting their names.

"It is Ross!" cried Cad. "Ross, Ross! come up here, we're housekeeping."

"You shouldn't stay so long," said Ross, stopping; "mamma has been worried about you. How did we know but you had got into the river."

"River!" echoed Cad, contemptuously.

"Come down, quick," said Ross; "I'm sent to take you home."

So the girls shut up the room and groped their way down stairs.



CHAPTER XIX.

OUT IN THE FARM-YARD.

"Green fields and silent glens, we come
To spend this bright spring day with you."



THE bustle and confusion of "fixing things" were nearly over. Ross's special pride, the bright red and gold easy-chair stood in the parlor; tables and globes were ranged in the old fashion. Occupying a niche, into which they fitted as cosily as if it had been made for them, a case of books, all the old favorites, stood on one side of the great oval window. Beneath it papa's favorite writing-desk comfortably reposed. Opposite the book-case stood the piano, flanked by an array of music racks. On a line with that the bay-window let

in the glory of hill and dale, and the handsome old-fashioned whatnot fitted one corner; these, with hassacks, chintz covered lounges filled with soft cushions, and straight-backed chairs, alternating with more modern seats, completed the room. The pictures which Mr. Winfield had allowed himself to bring had not yet been hung.

I must not omit to mention the blazing fire of hickory-wood, that set crimson sprites at work in every part of the room, or the grave old puss, who had finally consented to domesticate herself on the rug in front of the flaming hearth.

"You've taken the carpet up!" exclaimed Fanny, in a voice full of consternation, when she first entered the room.

"It was so faded!" said Kate.

"Papa means to have the floor painted and varnished, and then we shall put all the rugs down," said Mrs. Winfield.

"What does the room want?" queried Fanny, looking about.

"Occupation," said Mrs. Winfield, with a bright smile. "Wait a day or two, and I'll unfold my plan. Something was just whispered to me."

"It's mamma's little spirit-bird," whispered Cad, to Linda; "when mamma thinks nice things that nobody else would have dreamed of, she always says a little bird told her, and I call it her spirit-bird."

Cad soon broached the subject of the barn playhouse, and her mother decided to grant her wish, if she found the place a good one.

"I think it very likely I shall," she said; "particularly in summer."

Phil had started for the river, under a strict charge to keep himself out of it.

Ross was waiting with all the patience he could muster, for his father to get rested, that he might go over the farm with him, under Mrs. Primrose's guidance. The strong, red-armed girl, who had come to do the rough work, was on her way to milk the cow, and

that novel sight was participated in by all the little folks.

Even Fanny confessed herself interested in the operation, particularly as the strong girl proved incompetent, and mother Primrose took her place on the milking-stool. How the snowy streams came down, plashing the sides of the pan with great, white, foamy blotches at first, and then rounding up and growing deeper and deeper till the large pan was almost full.

Linda and Cad kept the pretty brown creature quiet with handfuls of sweet dried grass.

It was a picture full of beauty, softness and quiet content.

Daisy stood in a small enclosure, fragrant with scented clover flowers. All down the sides of old Redbow streamed rivers of color—red, green, purple and violet.

The sky showed here and there through clouds of drifting gold, a blue so intense that it was almost dazzling.

Ross threw himself down in a little hollow, covered with white and purple wild-flowers. "God made the country, didn't he, mother?" he said, drawing a breath, heart-deep with content—"and man the town. I rather think I prefer God's work."

"I hope we all do," said Mrs. Winfield, softly. She seldom moralized, but there were sermons in her eyes, in her loving smiles, in her charming youthfulness, when among children.

"O, mamma, and these are all God's little flowers, and this is His grass, and Redbow is His mountain," said Cad, reverently.

"Yes, love, every thing belongs to Him."

"Even us little girls;" then with a happy smile, "even my dearest Petkin; O! isn't it beautiful!"

Cad would emphasize.

Mother Primrose gave the pail of rich, foaming milk to the strong girl, and then took Cad and Linda to show them her vegetable patch. There every thing was "uncommon

forrerd," as she said. Tiny beets were pushing their way into the light, veined with crimson from stalk to tip.

"There never was such a hand for early sarce as my old man, and he allers manages to have it afore anybody else. Jest as soon as they git ripe enough, I'll send you over a good mess of 'em."





CHAPTER XX.

• MOTHER PRIMROSE AND CROQUET;

"O, dear is my cottage, unclouded by sorrow,
And sweet is the bower my Emeline wove;
Ah, nought from the gay or the wealthy I'd borrow
While blest with the smile of contentment and love."

THERE was one drawback to the felicity of the little folks of Redbow. Mr. Winfield's new pursuit kept him chained to the city during all the week. He came out late on Saturday afternoon, but was obliged to return at an early hour on Monday morning.

It seemed very sad, at first, to miss his daily presence; it cast a heavy shadow over the little household, and Mrs. Winfield set her wits at work to devise some remedy for their temporary home-sickness.

"In order that papa's absence may seem less painful to us all," she said, one day, "let us each one give him some little memento of the week—something simple, novel or useful, or even merely ornamental, that it may remind him of the busy little fingers planning for him while he is in the city."

Instantly every sad face brightened, as if by magic.

"Why, mamma, that's perfectly elegant!" exclaimed Cad, drawing out the word to its utmost length. "I do think your little spirit-bird has been flying about this morning."

"Now what shall we make?"

"My province is only to suggest," said Mrs. Winfield, smilingly, "yours to execute. Lessons first, little ones. Here is Ross, ready for you."

Ross seated himself with an unconscious assumption of dignity, at his father's desk.

"O dear," mourned Linda, "I can't find my grammar. I wish I never could find it, almost—it's an awful study anyhow."

"You left it on the hay, and it's been raining," said Cad, with portentous visage. Phil ran off to recover the book, and brought in a mass of pulp on the end of his fishing-rod.

"Grammar-hash!" he cried so exultingly, that poor little Linda burst into tears.

"I wouldn't be a girl, to cry for everything," said Phil, indignantly.

"I've got plenty of money," Linda said defiantly, after a little pause. "I can buy another."

"It isn't the money we care about, dear, it's the careless habit," said her aunt quietly.

"I used to be just so when I was little," Cad gravely rejoined, shaking her head, and then reproof was impossible. Mrs. Winfield saw something out of the window, and drew her lips in tightly.

"Never mind, Linda," she murmured, drawing the weeping child closer; "sometime you and I will have a long, comfortable talk about this matter. You'll be careful by and by, after a little training;" so she kissed the tears from

Linda's lashes, and sent her back to her tasks encouraged.

Ross made a capital teacher, while Mrs. Winfield busied herself about the house, or with good Mrs. Primrose and the stout girl in the kitchen. He had some trouble with Phil, whose genius for caricature kept the girls laughing, and the mark-book showed grievous strokes against that young gentleman; but Ross was patient, and patience and faith conquer even boys.

"What shall we make for papa?" asked Cad, when lessons were over, as she waylaid Fanny, who was intent on braided bib for Prince Charlie. "Do tell me; I can't think of a thing."

"Don't bother me now, Cad," said Fanny impulsively.

"You're not a sunshine sister, a bit," said Cad; "you ain't half moonlight. I never saw—"

"O, miss," said nurse Barton, coming in, "will you please read me my letter?"

"When did it come?" asked Cad, taking the missive.

"Just now, miss. The man in the green cart brought it."

"Is it from London?"

"Yes, miss, from my sister; and I'm so anxious."

"Come up-stairs, Barton."

Cad ensconced herself comfortably. It proved to be a letter from Barton's youngest sister, who was in raptures because somebody had found her a place of service in the family of a live lord.

"I never expected any of *us* would go that 'igh," said nurse, fervently.

"Do you call it high?" asked Cad.

"Miss, its a honor such as never was," replied Barton, with dignity. "Why, she's among the nobility. You should see a gentleman as is a lord," she added, her voice sinking, "there's nothing like it in this country."

"Nothing like it in this country, when you have seen MY FATHER!" said Cad, with rising

ire. "I don't believe there's a man in the whole of England could compare with him."

Barton grew humble instantly.

"I s'pose it's the way we're brought up, miss," she said apologetically.

"Did you ever see a lord?"

"Well, no, miss; I'm free to confess I never have, but my William did. Even their footmen are all covered with gold lace. But, miss would you write a line or two for me?"

Cad promised, and went her way. Linda met her at the door.

"I know!" she cried, clapping her hands.

"What?"

"Some of papa's nicest handkerchiefs were put in one of my boxes by mistake. You work his name in one with red, and I'll work one in blue."

"O, for papa!" said Cad," that will be elegant. Let's go to work, quick. It's only three days to Saturday. And, Linda," added Cad, with a serious face, "we must teach Barton her letters."

Mrs. Winfield approved of the room over the barn. All the playthings had been unpacked and put in place. Every part of the sunny, homely room had been thoroughly cleaned. Cotton curtains hung at the windows, and Cad was in her glory. The doll's four-poster and various cribs were snugly domiciled. Rugs made of gay colored rags contrasted finely with the freshly scoured boards, and over all the sunshine poured in unstinted measure.

Cad and Linda had their respective rocking chairs and tables. Near each of the little girls sat a basket, filled with useful implements; scissors, cottons, wools in bright colors, and every thing necessary for the little busy fingers, while fashioning the varied outfits for their numerous doll children.

Cad's tea and dinner-sets were neatly ranged on appropriate shelves. Ross had fitted an old cabinet with glass doors. This had been filled from day to day with curiosities, found in the woods or down by the river; veined

pebbles, strange formations of rock. This the girls looked over, dusted and arranged, and catalogued all the new ones weekly.

"It was just like real housekeeping," Cad said proudly, and the busy little bee would have set up an independent life, if the higher powers had allowed her to.

It was pleasant to see her making tea with a "truly" fire in the stove, while Linda was sweeping away imaginary dirt.

Then after the dishes were washed the two girls sat down at the window, to work a monogram in the handkerchiefs that were to be presented as love-tokens to papa.

How their little tongues flew! Cad, absorbed in Petkin's welfare, touched the tip of the cradle-rocker now and then, to keep her asleep, the wide open blue eyes never for a moment dispelling the sweet illusion that the "baby" was enjoying a refreshing slumber.

Suddenly Linda looked up.

"There's Fanny coming here, ever so fast. What can she want?"

"May-be papa has come home," Cad responded.

Fanny made her appearance, breathless.

"Your servant, ladies," she said, dropping a courtesy after Barton's fashion; "we are to go to mother Primrose's to take tea."

"O, then she's got something nice," cried Cad; "the very first in a hot-bed; she told me when they were ripe we should all come; won't it be delicious? Must we come now?"

"No, not till three, it's not two yet. You are only to put on white aprons, these dresses will do. When it's time, I'll ring the dinner-bell."

"Dear me, I *must* have a clock," said Cad.

"There's an old clock in the garret," said Fanny, turning on the threshold.

"O, Fanny, do you think it would go?"

"Yes—every time you shake it," laughed Fanny.

"I'll ask mamma to let me have it."

"You had better go rummaging in the garret," Fanny added; "there's no end of

old-fashioned lumber up there, enough to furnish half-a-dozen such rooms as this."

Cad's face grew radiant. Stores of wonderful plenishing came up before her vision. She caught her breath for very delight.

"It will be a sort of Robinson Crusoe work, won't it, Linda; what do you suppose we shall find?"

"Herbs and newspapers, and mouldy old clothes," cried Fanny from the foot of the stairs. "When you hear the bell ring, children, mind and come," she added.

"She always calls us children," said Cad, trying to frown. "I should think she might, see we are grown ladies, when she looks at our families."

"And the cooking stove," suggested Linda.

"Fanny always was unjust," was Cad's rejoinder.

Just then the bell rang, and they put up work hurriedly.

Linda overturned the cradle, but was in such haste that she left Petkin lying on its

nose, saying nothing to Cad, who was half-way down stairs. Besides that she forgot to lock the door—worse, she left it open an inch or so, much against her conscience.

In a trice, clean aprons and bright ribbons made the little folks presentable, and nurse Barton drew the carriage as far as the cottage porch, where, under the Virginia creeper, stood mother Primrose. Her snow-white cap, kerchief and apron, made her a picture amid the cool green vines and scarlet flowers.

A large, low-ceiled room first met the view, in the centre of which stood a folded screen. An immense fire-place, filled with branches of spruce, occupied almost the entire end of the apartment. In front of this a huge hearth, tiled in blue and white, that told the story of Joseph and his brethren. Rush-bottomed chairs, two antique chests of drawers, a spacious round table, and an oaken settle, made up the inventory of the simple furniture.

Cad sniffed strawberries. "How sweet it does smell!" she whispered to Linda.

So it did. A cleaner soul than mother Primrose never lived within the shadow of old Redbow. Every pane of glass in the little diamond-patterned lattice shone like a newly cut diamond.

"How beautifully white your floor is!" said Kate, admiringly.

"Two scrubblings a week, dear, for thirty years," said the old lady, significantly.

"Our floor must be scrubbed twice a week," said Cad, confidentially, to Linda.

Adjoining this living-room, or parlor, as she liked to call it in the summer time, was the cosiest of cosy little kitchens, where a small oven did duty once a week. The third room on the ground floor held a spotless bed, hung with dimity curtains, besides a few long cherished treasures in the form of sea-shells, coral branches, books, and a mighty baize-covered Bible, with iron clasps.

Outside, the fine lawn, stretching to the meadows that nestled at Redbow's foot, and covered with short, thick grass, slept perpe-

tually under the shadow of great branching oaks full two hundred years old.

"O, what a lovely place for croquet!" cried Kate.

"Cro-what?" said a positive and somewhat sharp voice, and old father Primrose came round the corner.

Kate explained the then new game.

"Odds ends!" said father Primrose; "that's a new notion of the city folks, isn't it? They don't have enow to do, so they fangle up things and put queer names to 'em. Well, well, anything to please the youngsters. I was young myself once, though I had to hoe, instead of crow—what d'ye call it? But then I was allays jolly; wasn't I, old lady?"

"That's just so," laughed mother Primrose, brightly; "father allays was jolly. It used to worry the church-folks a good deal; but says I, when Amos laughs, he ain't a scolding."

"Vicy versy, old lady," put in father Primrose.

"No, it aint vicy, for he's allays laughing,

and laughing keeps folks young," she added wisely. "But deary me, there's the clock strikin' four, and tea to be got!"

"Take it easy, mother, take it easy," cried her careful help-meet.

"That there brother o' yourn is a master hand for farming," said the old man to Kate, who stood near him. "There ain't a many as I can say is born to it; some of the farmers as I know is a thriftless lot enough, jest livin from hand to mouth. I didn't begin till late, myself, but I allays had a genius for it. You see I was Miss Lotty's head-man, in her time, and hed to see to too many things to give my own likings a lift; but when she was took, and left the wife and me this bit cottage and the land hereabouts, God bless her, I found, forty odd year though I were, that I had a takin to the ground, which made it nateral as life for me to coax things outen it. You see I never considered that I was too old to larn, and consequence is, I've got some idees on the subject, right fresh out o' trees and things,

that helps me a good deal, and helps other folks, too, I reckon. And so I and that brother o' yourn has hed some little chats together now and then, and I ken see he's got the root o' the matter in him. He'll make that place o' yours blossom like the rose, when he gits experience. It's a good sight better to work things yourself, than go shares; and there's money in Redbow acres, I tell him. He's a wise one for a young one, he is."

Kate flushed with delight to hear her brother so praised.

"It don't do no hurt for a farmer to be college-larned either; a gentleman farmer, as I look at it, is a man that no dirt wont harm. Larning is like the big middle wheel of a machine, it sets all the little wheels to going."

Fanny moved about, knitting on the little bib as she walked. She was forced to the conclusion that Redbow was a magnificent mountain, as she watched the gold and dun shadows roll down its mighty sides, while

the shifting clouds sailed like white majestic ships overhead.

It was so calmly grand. The birds flew in and out of its hollows; warm mosses slept up there in the darkling crevices; the rain made mimic rivers on its ledges, that tumbled over in miniature waterfalls. Trees snuggled in many a cleft of the rock; the cups of tiny flowers caught dew drops up there; the winds told their hollow secrets in its caves. Thunder had shaken the solid ground beneath it, lightning had riven many a noble oak; old Redbow laughed at both. There it stood, defying the storm, and gathering worlds of wealth in the sunshine.

"What *can* be inside?" thought Fanny.

Ross and Phil came over at tea-time.

"I guess—there's something—"

"Phil, hold your tongue!" shouted Ross.

"What is it?" urged Fanny.

"I'd tell for a sixpence. Ross thinks he's some," said Phil, wrathfully—and just then came a call to tea, and such a tea! Cream as

yellow as gold, in the sweetest, quaintest little silver pitcher, and peaches as luscious as they could be for last year's fruit, rimmed with scarlet. Honey like amber, biscuits like snowflakes for lightness and whiteness; what a feast it was! Mother Primrose said to herself that she had never seen such pretty behavior and delicate manners in little folks before. And then the strawberries preserves!

After tea, when they were all on the lawn, Phil and Ross brought from some place of hiding a long box, and lo! to their delighted eyes displayed a set of croquet.

Cries of delight, and "Where did you get it?" sounded on all sides.

"Papa was in the secret," said Ross. "We found a little old carpenter down by the river—old Joe Bangs—he's got a little mill there, and he made it to order."

Mrs. Primrose appeared at the door, towel in hand.

"Take it easy, mother, take it easy," said father Primrose.

"What is that thing?" queried Mrs. Primrose, peering at ball and mallet.

"That's crochay," replied the old man.

"Croquet," spoke up Fanny.

"Some sort of O K," laughed farmer Primrose.

For an hour the old lawn was alive with laughter and shouting, and running, and when the happy little folks left their game, Ross and Fanny were the victors.

"I say," said Cad, slyly pulling at her sister's sleeve, "there's no fun in the country."

"It's good enough for croquet," was miss Fanny's stately reply.

Nurse was to come for them, so the little folks sat on the old porch and told stories, and guessed conundrums, till the rising moon silvered the stately crown of Redbow.

Mother Primrose talked of dear little miss Alice, and then they went inside the little cottage, beautiful with the sweet glamour of cleanliness, and made ready for home.



CHAPTER XXI.

FATHER'S SURPRISE.

"In Eastern lands they talk in flowers,
They tell in a garland their lives and cares,
Each blossom that blooms in their garden bowers,
On its leaves a mystical language bears."

"**I**F ye'll let me, I'll take the little ladies down."

So said the sturdy farmer, who was to go for Mr. Winfield down to Campbell's Station.

"O, mother, say yes!" and with so many anxious eyes looking into hers, mother said Yes, and away they scampered after wraps.

Would Phil go? No, he was for trout fishing.

"Who wants to go with girls," he muttered to himself, as he turned away.

Into the old creaking wagon, guiltless of paint, they scrambled, and the two powerful farm-horses started.

"It was so much better," Cad said, "to sit and laugh and talk, and do just as they pleased, and have no prim coachman, with funeral dignity, asking which way he should go now."

The farmer was almost as jolly as father Primrose, and when they found themselves at the depot too early for the train, he showed them where they might find blackberries in the fall, and led them to a patch of ferns that made Kate's eyes dance.

When the train did come, one would have thought the handsome man, surrounded by the little ladies, had just returned from a tour in Europe, they made such a time over him.

When they drove up to the porch in the sweet sunset glow, all Redbow seemed to welcome them. Prince Charlie jumped into his father's arms with a wild whoop—Ross called it. There were exclamations of delight, and kisses all round, but when papa

was allowed to enter the family sitting-room, then indeed there was a genuine surprise.

Mr. Winfield stood rooted upon the threshold; then he went forward, and in the midst of the shouts of his little folks, stood still again.

"We all helped, didn't we?" cried Cad. "It took us such a time!"

"And we made a fernery of the aquarium," said Kate; "the poor little fishes *would* die."

"Well, *I* confess, you have surprised and delighted me," said Mr. Winfield.

And this was the sight that met his eyes. The great oval window encased in a broad, thick frame of evergreen—the pictures, that he supposed were still in boxes waiting his coming, all hung, and over each were lovely wreaths of oak leaves, pine cones and mosses. Home-made brackets in beautiful designs, backed with black velvet, against which the small statues of Parian marble were delicately outlined, stood in every recess.

The bay-window was transformed into a

lovely bower of hanging baskets, climbing vines, and flowers in pots. Ivy ran over the doors and windows. The whiteness of the floor was relieved by black and scarlet rugs, and beautiful bouquets stood in every available space. The sofas had been dressed in new bright chintz, the soft rays of the setting sun threw a bewitching glory over all, and the room was a picture, with all those bright faces about it.

"Perfectly paradisaical!" said papa, settling himself into the great arm-chair. "This is a home worth having. I feel like a monarch taking possession of his little kingdom. What fairies you are! How did you manage to get up all this splendor?"

"Ross and the carpenter went into the woods and took up the vines whole!" volunteered Cad, "and set them in the pots, and we all helped to put the moss on."

That was a happy Saturday evening. Mr. Winfield was delighted with his gifts of remembrance; the dear old songs were sung.

Prince Charlie, as usual, endured the petting of the whole family with undiminished good nature. Ross gave an account of his work, and there was but one drawback—Phil came home wet to the skin and minus his shoes. He gave a confused account of himself; said he left his shoes on the bank to “go in,” and could not find them when he came out.

“But haven’t I, time and again, expressly forbidden you to swim or bathe in that river?” his father asked, sternly.

Phil hung his head.

“Having abused my confidence, sir,” his father added, “I forbid you to fish in or go near the river for a month.”

But Phil did not speak. His proud little lip quivered for a moment, and his father dismissed him. Mrs. Winfield pleaded for an abatement of the sentence, but his father was resolute.

“Phil has been such a good little fellow, so long!” said his mother.

“He must learn to obey as implicitly when

out of my sight as when I am by ; else, away from home as I am most of the time, he will become dishonest as well as disobedient."

And so Phil was in disgrace.





CHAPTER XXII.

PLAYING-BIDDY.

"In every rank, or great or small,
'Tis industry supports us all."



FATHER PRIMROSE, with Ross, had staked out next year's strawberry bed, and made arrangements for a future greenhouse.

"I intend to grow fruit for the city markets," he said proudly to his father.

"And reely, wife, the method of him," said father Primrose, drinking his noon tumbler of milk. "I never see any thing beat him for brains. He's as cute as any surveyor; he's that rare genus, a born farmer, that young un, and I can't tell him much. The way he catches an idee is cur'us. 'O, I see,' ses he,

‘I see;’ and goes and tells how the thing can be done from root to branch. Tell you what mother, he’ll make old Redbow shine, one o’ these days.”

Mother Primrose went up to the “big” house a few hours every day. It was she who initiated Kate into the mysteries of making sponge-cake, and of sundry other delicacies. Nothing suited Kate better than to don the cooking apron, tie on a bit of muslin over the pretty curls, and dabble in flour and eggs.

Fanny had a wonderful genius for finding eggs, mother Primrose said. All hidden nests were revealed to her, and the good mother biddies seemed instinctively to feel that they must do their best when she was round. Perhaps ribbons were as precious to Fanny as ever, but she was certainly developing new excellencies of character. She took charge of the pretty sitting-room; the flowers she picked over, added to or changed, and as she was a particular little body, not a grain of dust escaped her quick glance.

Cad and Linda had all they could do to keep their little house over the barn in a neat condition. It was great fun to see them, in dresses suited to the occupation, scouring away on bended knees at the white pine floor, or polishing the stove and cooking utensils.

These plebeian tastes, as Fanny called them, Mrs. Winfield encouraged. Fanny went with a horrified face to her mamma, after finding them thus employed one day.

"My dear, it is the best exercise in the world, for them," said that judicious woman. "It was recommended for me when I was a little girl with a weak chest, and I often scrubbed up small rooms and halls. I know just what a pleasure it is, when done for play, so I shall let them make Biddies of themselves as often as they are inclined. It won't do to allow you little folks to run all to brains."

"But, mamma, uncle Harry is very rich in India, and Linda had servants for every thing; she didn't even wash her own face. Would her papa like it?"

"Her papa has given her in our charge, my dear, and I presume he wishes her to grow into healthful, happy, well developed womanhood. You remember what a sallow little creature she was when she first came here, only six months ago, and how she mourned for the candies and pernicious delicacies she had been so long accustomed to. Look at her now. Her cheeks have lost that unhealthy yellow tinge, and are getting quite rosy. Suppose we had allowed her indulgence in her unwholesome whims! I don't believe her father would have thanked me. She eats three meals a day, with a healthy appetite, and enjoys herself in useful as well as pleasant recreation. If she wants to mop floors, or even scour them, it wont do her any harm."

"But don't you believe Cad will have just such common tastes all the days of her life?"

Mrs. Winfield laughed, as she answered:

"Cad will learn the difference between work and play soon enough; I have no fear for her, dear little happy housekeeper. I do

think, however, that her tastes will always be in that direction, and whatever reverses may happen to her in after life, she will always be self-reliant, and able to work."

Ross came in that minute, a letter post-marked India, in his hand. It was nearly three months since they had heard from uncle Harry. Ross had been down to the village post-office, two miles off; the letter had been lying there over a week.

"Some of the clerks in your father's old store must have sent it here," said Mrs. Winfield. "Suppose you call Linda?"

Linda came, her eyes shining, her hair blown about by the wind, her hat in her hand.

"Ross says there's a letter from papa."

"Yes, dear, and how nice to think you have improved so much that you can read it yourself," said Mrs. Winfield.

"It's pretty hard," she said.

"But you can do it."

"O, yes, I'll try;" and down sat Linda, patiently to decipher a rather bad hand.

As Linda opened the letter, something fluttered to the floor.

"It must be money," said Linda, as Mrs. Winfield picked the paper up.

"Yes, dear, a large sum for a little girl; your papa has sent you an order on his banker for three hundred dollars. He must think his little girl needs a great many dresses and nice things."

"But I don't," said Linda eagerly; "I've plenty of dresses, even for parties, if I went to them. Three hundred dollars! O, I must go and tell Cad!"

"The letter first, dear—and see, you are trembling with excitement, that won't do."

"It's a short letter," said Linda, trying to compose herself.

"MY DEAR LITTLE GIRL:—I have written to your uncle in another letter. I send this money for yourself. Don't forget that papa loves his little daughter, and thinks of her. I have something of importance to tell you:

you have a new mamma, a very sweet and good lady, and I hope that some time you will see her, and that you and she will love each other very much. Both she and I agree in thinking that you had better remain with your aunt."

"O," cried the child, with a deep drawn breath, "I am so glad of that! wouldn't it be queer to be introduced to my mamma? But I love *you* so dearly, I hope papa will let me stay till I am a great, grown lady."

"I hope so too, dear," said Mrs. Winfield, returning her kiss.

Linda sat down again to her letter.

"You are to do exactly what you please with your money."

"O," interpolated Linda again, "I *do* want a pony, and so does Cad. Yes, we must have ponies—may we? You know there's a nice little pony-chaise in the carriage-house, and Ross said he could mend it. Then Cad and I would enjoy ourselves. Don't you think the money would buy two dear little ponies?"

"Finish your letter, love; we'll see what papa says about the ponies."

"And now good by, little daughter, with a hundred kisses. Your old Ayah wishes to be remembered to you. She is still in the house, with two of her own little brown babies, and very useful to your new mamma. A great deal of love to all, and be sure to write me a long letter, and tell me every thing about your studies, and all your dear cousins.

"Your devoted and affectionate father, etc., etc."





CHAPTER XXIII.

PONIES AND SPONGE-CAKE

"I would plant rich seed, to blossom in my manhood, and bear fruit when I am old."

TO her aunt, Linda gave the note, and hurried breathlessly back to the barn playhouse.

"O, Cad! Cad! what *do* you think came in my letter? Ponies, ponies! Petkin ought to get well of the measles right off, and Felice must stop coughing."

"Ponies—in a letter!" exclaimed Cad, who had swathed Petkin in blankets, and had been industriously improvising quite a sick-room atmosphere, in the shape of bottles and baths and pill-boxes.

I mean, the money came to buy them; we're going to have a pony apiece."

"A pony apiece!" screamed Cad, clapping her hands—"O! that is altogether too elegant!"

"That is, you know, I hope we are," continued Linda, rather sobered at Cad's rapturous exclamations.

"Do you mean a truly pony?" queried Cad, who sometimes used this rather infantile expression, a reminiscence of the days when she was little.

"Yes, if aunt and uncle both say yes; because you see papa has sent me three hundred dollars; what do you think of that?"

She paused a moment to note the effect of her speech in Cad's dilating eyes—"And I am to spend it just as I please, every cent of it."

"O, oh! my goodness!" emphasized Cad, and then paused with unspeakable interjections written all over her face.

Her next move was to catch up quiet, much suffering Petkin, and hug it with passionate

warmth, covering its stolid shining face with kisses.

"We are all well, now, darling," she cried; "at least the sickness has taken a favorable turn—don't you think it has, Linda? I do believe the doctor will say she ought to ride out."

"Yes, indeed; it will do her more good than all this nasty medicine—especially on ponies. I guess I'll put the bottles away, and the pills too. They will keep against another sudden attack of—any thing else, you know."

"Bilious fever," suggested Cad.

"Don't you see the ponies, saddled and bridled, standing down at the door?" cried Linda, clasping her hands fervently. "O, Cad," taking on a penitential tone, "I don't know as we deserve so much happiness."

"But we haven't got 'em yet," said Cad; "may-be papa won't see fit."

"O, yes he will; and what do you think—guess—what has papa got?"

"A white elephant?" queried Cad.

"O, dear, no; better than that."

"I never could guess conundrums or any thing," said Cad, suddenly anxious.

"It isn't a conundrum at all, its a—new—mamma!"

"For you?"

"For me!"

"She'll want you!" cried Cad in great alarm, catching hold of Linda; "you can't go, I cant let you go."

"No, she wont want me—I should hope not!" said Linda; "papa says I'm to stay here. What do you think of that?"

"It's better than the ponies," said Cad, "supposing we should get them. O, I was so frightened?"

"Let's go over to the house and tell the girls," said Linda; and putting their dolls carefully away, quite cured of measles and whooping-cough, they hurried to Redbow mansion.

There they found Kate in the sitting-room, showing, with no little pride, a golden loaf

of sponge-cake. Mother Primrose had followed her, and the sweet, genial old face, that reminded one of dried rose leaves a little crumpled, beamed all over with pleasure.

"Every mite, Mrs. Winfield," she was saying, "every mite she did with her own blessed little hands. Says I, 'I won't even look, deary, for I've that confidence in you;' and I didn't. It's every whit as good as her silver-cake, and as nice as I could do it myself. It's every thing to git a good bake. Scorch it a hair's breadth, your labor's lost. I want just the gold all-overish color, or I want nothing. It's just the way with some folks, mam, they seem mixed right, but somehow they git streaked in the baking."

"It is very beautiful, Kate," said Mrs. Winfield; "a perfect success—we won't cut it till papa comes home."

Kate, flushed and happy, turned away with her treasure.

Mrs. Primrose lingered.

"If I might be so bold," she said, "I should like to ride down to the depot, Monday, with Mr. Winfield. There's caliker and muslin to be got, for the sheeting is most gin out. I haven't bought any to speak of for ten year."

"Mother, there's shop," said Cad. "It's all in boxes."

"Sure enough," said Mrs. Winfield, smiling, "I had almost forgotten shop. I'm afraid we'll have to set it up over the barn; can you spare a bit of your house?"

Mother Primrose looked mystified.

"If you don't care about going to the village, Mrs. Primrose," said Mrs. Winfield, "I think we can suit you. We have plenty of good muslin, and nice plain calicoes, besides cotton, needles, and an assortment of dry goods generally."

"Deary me!" ejaculated Mrs. Primrose, gazing vaguely from one to the other.

Mrs. Winfield explained, and the good soul was relieved.

"I'd give most anything not to go to town, I'm always phthisicky after it. Well now, du tell, ain't it comfortable to have things so."

"Ross shall open the boxes," said Mrs. Winfield, "and you must take a dress as a present from me."

"Well I never—I'm sure you are too kind," said the grateful old lady; "and the idee is so nice! Your children will know every thing—keepin shop, and keepin house—well well, you allays was a little methody."

Mrs. Winfield smiled as the good old lady went out, radiant.

"Mamma, she says you are perfect," spoke up Cad, "and *I* think you are."

"Very far from it, darling," said Mrs. Winfield, her face suddenly grave.

"You *must* be," continued Cad, with quiet emphasis. "You never get angry, as we little folks do, or careless, or lazy; do you?"

"I'm afraid, dear, I get angry oftener than you suspect," said Mrs. Winfield, an amused smile breaking over her face.

"Why, when—where?"

"I can't boast of perfection, yet awhile," said Mrs. Winfield, a little sadly—"at least while I have such an ignorant girl in the kitchen. I get very impatient at times, but I should be sorry if I did not try to control my temper, looking to our dear Lord, who knows how frail the best of us must be. The trouble is not in possessing the hasty temper, my dear, but in letting it out in ugly words or unkind actions, to the injury of ourselves and those around us. When I feel that quick, uprising heat, I put my lips together this way, and simply determine that I will hold my tongue. That is the best remedy, and one you know I often advise you to try."

Then ensued a silence, broken by Linda.

"Well,"—with a long breath, "*I am so glad!*"

"What are you glad of, dear?"

"That you are just like the rest of us—only better—only you know *how*. But you are not careless, like I am."

"Don't say *like* I am, Linda, dear, for it is very bad taste, to say nothing of the grammar. I was careless, once, if that will comfort you."

"You, mamma!" cried Cad. "O-h!"

"When I was a little girl, dear, of your age."

"And now you are just as neat as a new pin."

"I try to be, darling."

"How *did* you learn?"

"By determining that I would never take an article from its place, unless I returned it again. Never, under any circumstances, leaving drawers or boxes disarranged. By keeping a strict watch over myself in these particular matters. So, you see, care and method grew to be second nature. It would be almost impossible for me to be untidy now."

"O, mamma," you *are* splendid!" cried Cad, with sudden enthusiasm. "I want to hug you;" and presently Mrs. Winfield had them both about her neck.

"And I think my little girls are splendid."

"Sometimes, mamma;—not always good, like you. Now, don't you say you are not always good, because you are."

"And when we get our ponies," said Linda, "we'll take you out airing every day."

A merry laugh ended the interview.





CHAPTER XXIV.

COUNTRY PLEASURES.

"Give me the green sward with its flowers,
And mirth and song and jollity.



ANNY, Cad and Linda were playing with Prince Charlie on the front porch, still discussing the subject of ponies, when Cad exclaimed:

"O, I see an *el*-egant carriage, and I do believe it's coming right straight here."

It was coming, not straight, but in a curved line, and it certainly seemed as if it meant to stop at Redbow porch. The children went in to tell Mrs. Winfield, who quietly divested herself of her white apron, smoothed her dress, and was ready for company.

It proved to be a lady who was spending

the summer two or three miles from Redbow. She had been a friend of Linda's mamma, and was glad of this opportunity of forming an acquaintance with Mrs. Winfield.

At her request the children were sent for. Linda was, of course, the most noticed and caressed.

"I knew your mamma when she was quite a little child, my dear," she said, "for I was born in England, and we went to the same school. I have five little girls, the eldest about the age of miss Kate here. They were promised a party on Marcia's birth-day, which comes on the twenty-seventh of this month. Marcia wished me to come over here and invite your little girls. If we send a carriage for them at noon on that day, will you let them come, Mrs. Winfield?"

Kate smiled, Fanny's eyes sparkled, Cad and Linda secretly squeezed each other's hands.

Mamma saw no objection.

"It will be a bright moonlight evening, I

hope," continued the visitor, "and my horses and my driver are safe. Of course, I include your sons in the invitation—I think you told me there were two. We have a fine croquet ground, and we shall endeavor to procure a band of music. The only parties we ever give are those in honor of our children's and our own birth-days, and we try to make them as interesting as possible."

They shall all be ready by noon of the 27th, Mrs. Winfield promised.

Mrs. Baker, for such was the visitor's name, grew enthusiastic as she watched the shifting colors on old Redbow's sides.

"I should never weary of it," she said; "what a poet's home you have! I must tell the children about the flowers and the vines: I really never saw anything like it; and the view from that oval window is simply perfect."

When their new friend had gone, the busy little tongues chattered like the clicking of machinery. Fanny, the only discontented one, declared she had nothing fit to wear.

"Your sweet blue muslin," said Kate.

"I tore it in the front breadth."

"Your beautiful summer silk."

"I spoiled it with cherry stains—they'll never come out."

"Your white, tucked dress, then."

"A yard too short," said Fanny, disconsolately "and old fashioned."

"Then what shall we do?" asked Kate, a little disconsolate, turning to Mrs. Winfield.

"What will you wear, dear?" asked her mother.

"My white mull, freshly done up. Won't that look nice with cherry ribbons, or something?"

"If Fanny thinks we can make it among us, she may have my white and blue check silk," said Mrs. Winfield.

"O, mamma! that splendid thing!" cried Fanny. "But Kate is the eldest; it ought to be hers," she added, growing despondent, again.

Kate wavered, she had often admired the

blue and white silk, but it was only for a moment.

I had just as lief have the white one," she said, quietly. "I'm too dark for blue, and Fanny's complexion is just right. We will all help make it, mother."

Mrs. Winfield smiled in a pleased way. She thought of a nice piece of black silk, snugly tucked away in one of her trunks, just enough to make a stylish little overskirt with bretelles, for Kate, and it could be trimmed with rich lace from one of her now useless dresses. This she meant to do without letting the generous girl into the secret.

"You shall have the dress to take to pieces after study-hours, to-morrow," she said aloud. "Fanny must find an old gown that she likes, and rip the body. Then we can cut the silk over it," added Mrs. Winfield; "and I think it will make a really nice dress."

"What shall *we* wear?" queried Cad, who had been talking the while in an undertone with Linda.

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"We'll get you off in your best calicoes," laughed Mrs. Winfield.

"Cad shall have one of my mulls, and then we shall be twins," said Linda.

"And we'll both wear cherry ribbons," suggested Cad. "Her clothes just fit me."

"But you have plenty of your own, dear," said her mother.

"O, but you see, we want to be exactly alike," pleaded Linda.

"And then, none of mine are so fine; why hers are just like air; you can hardly see them when you hold them up to the light. Please mayn't I, mamma?"

Mrs. Winfield yielded, and it was settled. Fanny gave Kate a hearty kiss.

"You are the dearest, most unselfish sister in the world," she said.

"May-be if I hadn't been dark," Kate replied, "I might have been more selfish."

"I wish I was dark," responded Fanny. "I truly do, as Cad says; I think brown eyes are beautiful."

After lessons next day—and I am afraid they were not as perfect as usual—the girls went up into the nursery, to rip the seams of the pretty blue silk.

“How kind mother is!” said Fanny; “do you think our *own* mother could have been kinder?”

“No, indeed, I do not,” was Kate’s resolute reply. “I do believe she would have been just like her. Take care and don’t let the scissors slip, you’ll cut the silk.”

“I can’t be patient,” said Fanny, with a jerk, making another small rent.

“You *must* be, Fanny; this silk is too good to spoil.”

“But how can I be? I tell you what, I’ll get my old waist, that I’m going to cut a pattern by, and rip that. I’m not fit to do any thing carefully, I get so nervous.”

“Mamma wouldn’t say that,” replied Kate. “She would tell you to conquer yourself, even in ripping.”

“There’s no use, Kate, not the slightest—

there's another slip. I hold it just as even as I can, hateful old thing!"

"Hateful old thing! that pretty dress! And you were so glad of it."

Fanny was silent. She put her lips together, and went on hacking and mutilating for a few moments. Then she paused.

"What an ugly, hateful disposition I must have," she said; "if things don't go just easy, I am angry right off."

"It's something, dear, to be conscious of one's faults," Kate said, gently.

"I just will conquer it—I'm determined," said Fanny, resolutely, and she set her lips together again, this time to some purpose.

It was really astonishing how, after awhile, the stubborn seams yielded. Fanny's brow grew brighter, and her talk more cheerful, smiles came to her lips. She felt that at last her good angel had triumphed.



CHAPTER XXV.

DRESS-MAKING, AND ITS TRIALS.

"To stitch and pick out, to gather and hem,
Was ever poor maiden so bothered before,
I wish dresses grew like the apples, on trees,
For sewing and seaming all day is a bore."

THE morning of the party dawned clear, bright and beautiful. Not a cloud was in the sky, the air was laden balmily with the breath of thousands of flowers. Old Redbow broke out of the earlier mists, and flushed all over with gold and crimson, as the splendor of the risen sun enveloped him.

Jewels hung from every tiny blade of grass, every tasselled ear of corn was splendid with diamonds. Mr. Winfield had given himself a brief vacation. He stood upon the front

porch, Prince Charlie in his arms. The little fellow seemed in fine joyous sympathy with nature. Sunlight and gorgeous color, the fresh aromatic fragrance of the pines, the lovely tinting of field and sky, were not lost even upon his baby senses. He laughed and crowed in sympathy with them, and repeated his one word of appreciation, "Pitty! pitty!" with eyes as clear and soft as the blue sky itself.

The little girls within were helping mamma to the best of their ability. Cad and Linda were rolling up fresh white napkins, and slipping them in their ivory rings. Fanny was giving an extra polish to the glass goblets, and the pitcher in which the warm, rich milk was poured every morning. Kate appeared at the door, a plate in her hand heaped with golden-tinted corn cakes, and finally, Mrs. Winfield came in to cut the wheaten loaf.

"Mamma, Fanny says you can tell by feeling, when the glass is not clean; can you?"

"I think I can, Cad."

"Well, the only way to get it *perfectly*

clean, is to wash and rinse in *very* hot water, isn't it?"

"That is the best way, I think."

"If *you* think so, then it *is* the right way."

The hum of childish talk, and little bursts of merry laughter rang out to the porch. Ross had joined his father; nurse had taken Prince Charlie.

"The corn looks well, sir," said Ross.

"I never saw better," his father responded.

"Ross, I begin to believe, as father Primrose declares, you're a 'born farmer.'"

"It does seem to come natural," said Ross, flushing, "and I am never happier than when I'm working in the soil. Once in a while I have some trouble with the hands, but father Primrose always gets me out again."

"You dont regret giving up a profession then. What will you do when you see your old school-fellows shooting ahead, while you are plodding?"

"I beg pardon, sir, what's to hinder me from shooting ahead? If there isn't a great

deal of money to be made out of farming, it seems to me there's a great deal of happiness, and I'd rather be happy and healthy, than rich. Still, to one who has, as you are pleased to say I have, a decided talent for farming, I believe there is money in it—a good deal, too, in the long run. All those fellows of ours, will be constantly exposed to the temptations of city life, and some I know are not proof against very slight ones, so there you see I have a decided advantage over them. I'm down on the city for young men."

"I see you are," said Mr. Winfield, a pleasant smile changing the look of deep earnestness he wore; "so I suppose I must let you have your 'ain' way."

The breakfast-bell rang, and presently the whole family were seated at a well-ordered table.

"This is some of our Kate's butter, dear," said Mrs. Winfield, passing the dish.

"Kate's! You don't tell me she makes butter too."

"She churned and made four pounds yesterday."

"Sweet as a nut," was the verdict, while Kate's cheeks burned, and her eyes sparkled.

"The wonder to me is how she does so much," said Mrs. Winfield, "and keeps up with her studies."

"She does that," said Ross; "I have to work sharp to run ahead, or rather, I did."

Ross had resigned his post of teacher, in favor of Mrs. Winfield.

Mr. Winfield's face grew radiant. Softly to himself he murmured:

"*All* things shall work together for good to those who love God."

"My dear," he said, aside to his wife, "men sometimes condole with me since my business losses, that I have buried myself and my family in the country. It makes me pity them, for I think that I am, without exception, one of the happiest men to-day on the face of the earth. Money! why it is dross compared to the riches I see around me. I don't know

that I care ever to go back to city life, do you?"

"Never," was the reply.

Poor Fanny had shed many tears and lifted many crosses during her self-imposed task of cutting and making. Over and over again had seams to be unbasted, breadths ripped, bias folds widened and narrowed. That perverse genius that dwells not within the precincts of first class modistes, and skilful workwomen, perched itself atop every new effort and caused woful failure. The dress which Fanny cut by, was a favorite one, but she had so changed under the blessed auspices of Redbow, that it was now both too short and too small for her.

Then Fanny sat down, and undisciplined girl-fashion, had a good cry over it. Tears for such failures, she knew her mother condemned, particularly angry ones, so her only course was to try and remedy the difficulty, which she did after many trials of patience, and with Kate's help.

Time would fail me to tell of the numberless seams sewed wrong side out, that being Fanny's failing, the result of thoughtlessness. Then when the almost herculean task seemed nearly finished, behold she had stitched the skirt back foremost, gathers and plaits all reversed, and neatly fastened.

"It does seem," cried Fanny, when Kate pointed out the fault, "as if I should like to sit down, and tear this *horrid* dress to bits. Four days have I been working over this skirt. I've a great mind to throw it in the fire."

"I had rather you would throw it at me," said Kate, cheerfully. "I would rectify all mistakes."

"Kate, do look cross, or something, if it *isn't* your trouble. It's awfully provoking, and you know it is, after all this hard work, to have it to go over again. Do you know I feel a sort of personal hatred towards this dress, as if it were something human, trying to spite me?"

"I dare say," said Kate; "I've felt just so many a time; but then you know, Fanny, it isn't a good spirit to cherish."

"One can't be good; it's just impossible," retorted poor Fanny. "The more you try, the harder and the worse it is—and I don't care."

"One *can* conquer foolish, unreasonable feelings," said Kate.

"Well, it isn't *your* dress, nor your trouble," said Fanny with some heat. "Besides, what's the use? if you gave me ever so much sympathy 'twouldn't help me. One has to keep going over and over it, doing just the same wrong things to-morrow we've repented of to-day. I've conquered, I do believe, a thousand and one times. I don't like to have to."

"But for all that, its keep *having* to all one's life, I suppose," said Kate.

"Then what's the use of being here at all, of living, any way?" pouted Fanny, "it's awful tiresome."

Kate did not answer just then. Fanny

looked tearfully up into the pure calm sky, on the shadow-chased gorges of Redbow.

“What’s the use of living?” echoed back on her unquiet heart. The thought of something her father had said in the morning prayers, thanking God for so many mercies—that no sickness had fallen upon them—that they were all in full possession of their faculties, sight, hearing, the power of speech, the will of helpfulness, the ability to love and counsel each other. She looked again in the deep of the azure above, and it seemed as if the dear Lord, whose eye pierces the inmost recesses of the heart, could see her ungrateful thoughts.

The dress had fallen to the floor beside her in a glittering heap. What a beautiful color it was now, that the sun shone upon it! And how kind her mamma had been to part with it so cheerfully, to such a wilful, fretful, ungrateful girl. She lifted it slowly, her lip quivering; it was not so hard to conquer for the thousand and second time, as it had been for the thousand and first.

With a right good will she gathered the ravelled edges of her patience, and began again. Snip, snip, went the scissors, but poor Fanny never allowed herself to be without some pet-worry. Like a great many grown people I have known, if troubles did not come, she had the faculty of improvising them.

"I *know* I shan't have my grammar-lesson," she sighed; "I only went over it twice."

"I'll read it aloud," said Kate, cheerfully; and with clear, distinct tones she performed the task.

Fanny's thoughts wandered.

"You ought to have had the silk," she said.

"Never mind me—I shall be just as happy in white muslin; do you think you understand the lesson?"

"I guess so—there!" and the skirt was triumphantly displayed. "Now, if that isn't right, I'll"—she caught Kate's eye, hesitated, then added demurely, "I'll try again."

"Bravo!" said Mrs. Winfield, as she entered the room.

"There's some little hope for me, isn't there, mamma?" asked Fanny, timidly.

"A great deal, my dear—and a great improvement, too."

"It needs lace in the neck."

"I'll attend to that," said her mother.

So, as I said before, the wished for holiday had come at last.





CHAPTER XXVI.

WHAT CAME OF PHIL'S SWIMMING.

"Happy the school-boy ! did he know his bliss,
'Twere ill exchanged for all the dazzling gems
That gayly sparkle in ambition's eye ;
His are the joys of nature."



ALL lessons were omitted. Not so the more important duties of Cad's housekeeping. Both Cad and Linda, little trouble-free creatures, knew they should be taken care of, like human lilies that spin not. Doll Blanche was dressed in her finest and best, in honor of the party to which she was not invited. Petkin was put in a white frock, and some of Felice's finery borrowed for the occasion. Then the room was set in thorough order, and artistically

arranged, when lo! like a sunbeam on the top stair, looking through the open door, white cap, white ribbon strings, white kerchief, suggestive of immaculate purity, stood mother Primrose.

"I've jest been to your ma's, to see the calikers, children, and I took a notion to come over here. I've been a wanting to come this long time. Well, bless my heart! if ever I see sech little dears for housekeeping! I kinder misgive that I should find you in heaps."

"We never get in heaps, only when Phil comes here," said Cad. "He's broken the stove once, and almost killed Petkin with fright. She hasn't got over palpitation to this day; has she, Linda?"

"Not once, poor little soul," echoed Linda, gravely.

Mother Primrose screwed up her mouth.

"It does mind me of Ben," she continued, after she had tied her cap strings in order to drive the laugh away.

"Who was Ben?" queried Cad.

"He were miss Lotty's coachman, dear, with the habits and manners of a gentleman. Nobody knowed what was his history, for he never talked about himself, but everybody could see that he hadn't been intended at the first for a servant. Miss Lotty thought a sight of him, and this was his home; he wouldn't sleep at the house. He was took sick here, and miss Lotty had him carried to the house, and I helped nurse him. When he died, we found a miniature set in gold, lying on his heart, poor dear, the picter of a beautiful lady, and miss Lotty said there had been diamonds in it; and no gentleman could a looked sweeter and nobler than he, dear soul, when he was laid out. Miss Lotty took the picter, and a letter he had left with all his instructions, and sent them to his own country in England, and that's all I know about it. Dears, if he could just see this now, how it would please him, sure. He kept the place like a pink, jest as you do.

"Deary me! pots and pans and kittles—cups and sarcers and things. Well dears, your ma didn't have no sech when she was a little one. I've seen her often a playing with bits of broken chaney, as contented as a little queen. Miss Lotty didn't understand children, but she loved 'em, bless her!"

"Won't you sit down?" queried Linda, bringing a chair forward.

"Bless your polite little heart, no. I left father alone with the rheumatiz—both knees a going. I wish he could do as he tells me to, poor soul—take it easy, but pain's apt to put one out o' jint."

"We'll give you a ride when we get our horse and carriage," said Cad, gravely; "we've given up the ponies."

"Given up the ponies!" said mother Primrose, standing in the sunshine again.

"Yes, Cad and I were going to buy ponies," chimed in Linda, "but uncle said we'd better have a steady going horse and carriage."

Good Mrs. Primrose thought it was all in

the play—that the horse and carriage were imaginary.

“Thankee, little ones, thankee,” she said, laughing, “but I guess I should be too heavy for your horse and kerrige.”

Fanny came down breathless, to tell the children they were wanted.

Such bustle and confusion as there was at Redbow, such exclamations and asking for things! Nobody seemed to have quite hands and fingers enough. Mrs. Winfield decked the two little ones in their India muslins, fine as air, Cad said, not inaptly, and tied their hair with the lovely rose-colored ribbons.

Then Fanny came in for inspection. She was a little nervous, and fearful that her dress did not fit well, but her anxiety was soon set at rest.

“Don’t my stockings wrinkle? There, if there isn’t a hole in my glove! O, dear me, where *did* I put my handkerchief!”

“It’s only Fanny that *ever* frets,” said Cad, sententiously.

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Fanny wheeled around with an angry frown, but checked herself admirably. She turned a little red as she answered, pleasantly,

"I believe I am, Cad, that's a fact. I ought to have been christened Pepperpot."

"We eat that, in India," said Linda, "and don't it bite?"

"Just as I do, when I'm ugly," laughed Fanny.

"You're not ugly," said Linda, reflectively; "you're only—"

"Cross," suggested blunt Cad.

"Nervous," said Mrs. Winfield, smiling.

"Is nervousness a disease?" asked Fanny.

"Yes, dear; but patience, taken in large quantities, will cure it."

Fanny smiled; she was all right now. Perhaps she was trying to forget the number of times she had conquered herself. What was the use of counting, when she was trying in such earnest?

Kate entered next, looking as fresh and sweet as a white rose.

"I thought pink would be pretty for a sash. What do you say, mamma?"

Mrs. Winfield, for answer, opened a drawer in the old-fashioned bureau near her, and drew out the loveliest black silk overskirt and bretelles, perfectly made and exquisitely trimmed. To see the faces of the little folks then, was a study.

"This, for me!" cried Kate, breathless with astonishment.

"O, isn't it perfect!" exclaimed Fanny, delighted. "Kate, you are a young lady in that; nobody would think of calling you a girl. Doesn't she look charming? I'm so glad!"

"But is it really for me?" asked Kate again, looking at her pretty reflection in the glass.

"Yes, dear, it is for you; a reward of merit."

"But what for? I never expected it."

"Of course you didn't."

"And that makes it all the nicer, don't it?" echoed Cad, dancing around her.

"This is *real* lace, too. I never wore any thing half so beautiful before. O, mamma,

how I thank you! you are always doing something nice for us." There were tears in Kate's eyes.

"I *always* said she was an angel!" cried Cad, and regardless of mull as 'fine as air,' she gave her mother a hearty hug.

"I guess we'll all look as well as anybody," said Linda, complacently.

"No matter how we look," said Cad, loftily, "if we only behave well. The *times* I have to tell Felice that, she is *so* vain!"

"Of course we'll behave well," said Linda, "don't we do that at home?"

It may not be amiss to observe here, for the benefit of the big as well as little folks, that company behavior is generally the transcript of home-manners.

The carriage came, and Ross made his appearance on the scene. Phil had begged off, saying that he didn't want to go to a girl's party; but as fishing was interdicted, poor Phil wandered about disconsolately, finding time hanging heavily on his hands.

A beautiful open carriage had been sent for them. Ross sat beside the driver, and talked crops, for the driver was quite an intelligent farmer. The little girls held their parasols primly for a time, but they soon grew tired, and putting off city airs, as Cad called them, they enjoyed the fine scenery and the delicious atmosphere.

At last they came in sight of extensive grounds well laid out, and surrounding a fine white mansion, on the piazza of which stood several girls in groups.

"Isn't it *el-egant*?" whispered Cad.

"Yes; O dear, there's a marquee!" whispered Linda.

"Do you mean the big tent?"

"Yes, papa had one in his garden when he had grand company."

"What a lovely green lawn!" Fanny said to Kate; "but dear me, I'm afraid I'm nervous again. They are all strangers to us."

"But they won't be, by and by."

Presently the lady of the mansion came

out, quite delighted to see them. They were taken to the dressing-rooms, and afterwards introduced to the daughters, the eldest, Marcia, being near Kate's age.

How often the expressive word "*el-egant*" escaped Cad's lips, I am unable to say, but certain it is, the enjoyment of that afternoon was absolutely perfect. The games were various and delightful. All were allowed to help themselves to the fruit which grew in abundance and within reach. There was music indoor and out, and as soon as it was dark the grounds were brilliantly lighted, and supper served on long tables under the illuminated marquee.

"I never had so delightful a time in my life," said Kate to Marcia Baker, as they wandered in the moonlight on the borders of a tiny sheet of water, where a fountain threw its fairy-like spray at their feet. Kate found in Marcia a kindred spirit, and Kate was a girl after Marcia's own heart.

"I am glad you have enjoyed yourself, but

mamma has been telling us what a beautiful home you have, right under the mountain. She quite fell in love with it."

"Yes, we have a pleasant home," replied Kate, her heart swelling at thought of all its sweet domestic comforts. "Our house is smaller than this; this is more like the city home we used to have before papa—" Her cheeks tingled, but she had gone too far, and was too honest to retract—"before papa failed," she added, resolutely.

"But you wouldn't wish to go back to the city again! We are going to make a trial of this place for one year. Won't we have grand times in winter, though; better than parties or concerts, *I* think."

"I wish you would tell sister Fanny so," said Kate.

"Don't she like Redbow?"

"Not as well as the city."

They turned and saw Fanny with her arm around Nelly Baker's waist. Nelly Baker's arm was around hers.

"If she is talking with Nelly, she is hearing all about it," said Marcia, laughing. "Nelly is even more in love with the country than I am. Papa is the only one who has doubts. If he could get a good teacher here, he says he should know just what to do."

"Mamma is our teacher," said Kate proudly.

"How pleasant that must be! We have a governess, and she is good, but so prim and old-fashioned."

"You will certainly come over to Redbow and see us?" said Kate.

"Just as soon as possible. Mamma is so pleased to think you are near us; she often talks about it."

As the little folks of Redbow rode home that night, under the silvery beams of the moon, that sent its troops of sprites into every hedge and under every tree, to make the shadows dance and the leaves glisten, they voted that never in the palmiest days of their city experience had they enjoyed themselves so much.

Arrived at Redbow, it was all the mother could do to get them to their bed-rooms. Then each ran back for a kiss, and to thank her for contributing so much to their pleasure; and I doubt if she was not a little happier than they.

Meantime, while they had been enjoying themselves at the party, Phil had wandered about, playing now with Boze, the great Primrose farm dog, now having a chat with the good-natured old man himself. Then Mrs. Winfield made him some of his favorite cake for supper, after which he joined in a frolic with Prince Charlie, and then went early to bed.

"It seems too bad to keep him so long from the river," said his mother, after he had left the room; "the poor little fellow does enjoy his fishing-sport so much. I am afraid you are a little too hard on Phil."

"He must learn to be obedient," said Mr. Winfield, laying down his book. "There are certain traits in his character, that, without

sedulous watching, will be sure to crop out into the vices that destroy so many half-grown boys."

"I differ with you a little," said his wife, gently; "I think Phil has very noble traits underlying his very faults, even. You know I have him under my eye, and can more leisurely read him."

Mr. Winfield moved uneasily.

"Perhaps you are right, my dear; but I am afraid to relax my discipline. Phil must not fish this month at all events. He must have a lesson that will stand by him."

The outer door-bell rang, and the old mill carpenter, as he was called, came in, on business.

"How's that boy o' yourn?" asked the old man, after other matters had been attended to.

"Which boy?" asked Mr. Winfield; "you know I have two sons."

"Yes, yes, now I member; there's two of 'em; the tall un, and the little un. Well, 'twas the little un as fished our Jem out o' the

river. The youngster'd been gone a while, and had toddled down to the east side, by the bend, when his ma missed him. I felt despitly sorry bout them shoes, but Rove, my little dog, got 'em day after, an' he has a habit o' hidin things, but bless you, they was just spiled. I calc'late you'll hev to take them outhen my pay for work."

Mr. Winfield caught his wife's eye, and grew red.

"I don't quite understand," he said. "The boy came home without his shoes, and confessed that he had gone in swimming."

"Well, yes," said the old farmer with a grim smile, "sh'd think he did; went swimming down the crick for that little wollopog, or he'd been a gone Jemmy, that's sartain. His mother, that's my darter, took on terrible, even after the baby was brought to her, saf'n well; an' she'll never forgit that boy o' yours, you bet!"

It was homely language, but it stirred the father's heart within him as it had never been

stirred before. Mrs. Winfield silently arose and hurried from the room. Direct to Phil's chamber she bent her steps, and found him placidly watching the moon, with his arms thrown over his head and his hands clasped. With her eyes blurred with tears, she bent over and kissed him. Boy fashion he blurted out,

"What's that for?"

"For that brave, brave deed of yours, you naughty boy," she said, chokingly. "Why didn't you tell papa that you saved little Jemmy, down at the old mill? And here you have been punished all this time for nothing."

"Well, didn't he ask me if I went in swimming? So I did," he added, with a boyish chuckle.

"You are my brave, noble boy!" said his mother, one or two tears falling on his hand. "And I am sure your father thinks so too. But you should have told the whole."

"Someway—I—couldn't," said Phil, pulling at the counterpane. "Who told you?"

"The old carpenter himself."

"Did he bring home my shoes?" asked Phil, eagerly.

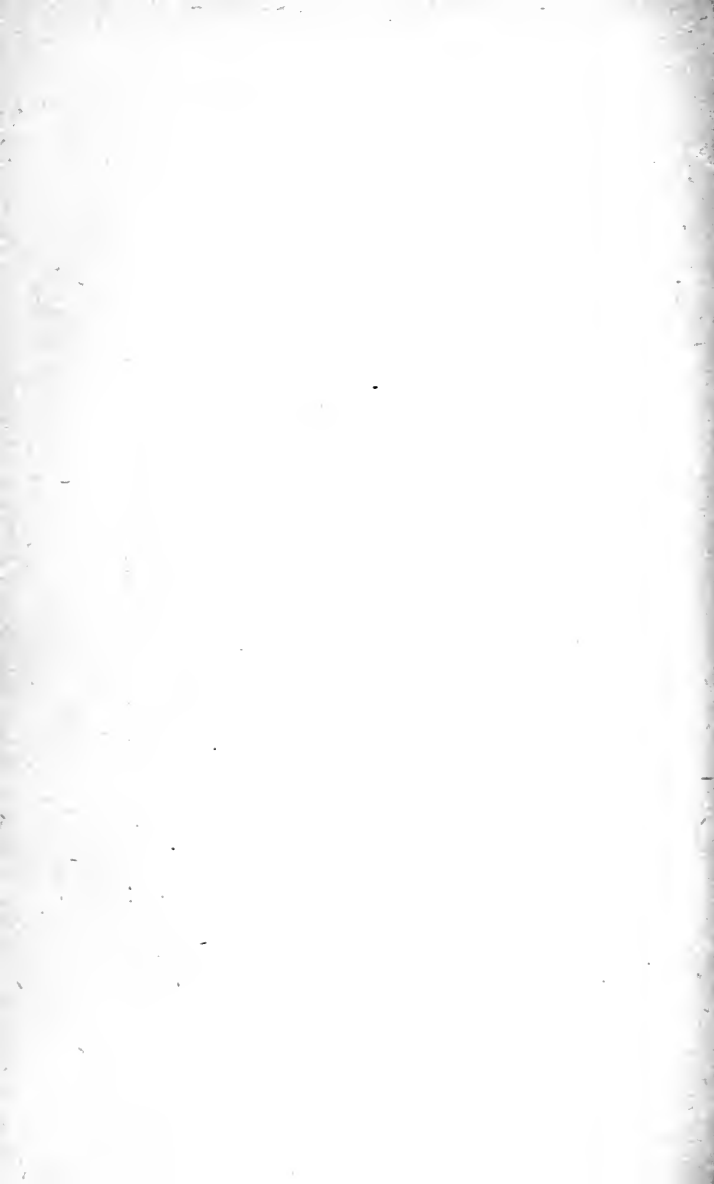
"No, dear; he said they were spoiled. Suppose you tell me all about it."

"It isn't any thing to tell," said Phil, reluctantly. "I was fishing, you know, and had caught three pike, big fellows! That little Jemmy had been fooling round with the dog, and I didn't pay much attention to him. But I'd just bated my hook, when I heard somebody screaming like mad, and the carpenter's daughter was outside the red cottage, crying 'murder!' and that Jemmy was drowned. Well you see, just then I caught sight of his white head, bobbing opposite the bend; so I off with my things—I tell you I never did get 'em off quite so quick before—and in I went. It was straighter to swim from there than go round the bend, you know."

Mrs. Winfield nodded yes to his intelligent glance.

"I thought I never should reach him; it





even seemed as if the water pushed me back; but I did. If I didn't ketch him by that tow head of his!" Phil chuckled again—"and then I made for the bank." Phil looked at the moon for a moment. "Twasn't any thing; a dog could have done it," he added.

"But a dog didn't do it; it was our Phil, who saved a dear little girl's canary once from roasting alive."

"Wouldn't it have made a jolly little roast, though?"

It was a touch of boy-nature, and Mrs. Winfield smiled.

"What did the child's mother say?"

"She couldn't say much," returned Phil, with a wry face, "but she kissed me;" and Phil wiped his lips—"took advantage of a fellow, when he was down. She screamed enough when she had got him in the house, though. Now what did she do that for?"

"The danger all came up before her, I suppose," said Mrs. Winfield.

"Well, all I hope is that Jemmy won't

come round me while I'm fishing," was the rejoinder.

"And so you see you have been unjustly punished. If we had known this, your father would have been prouder of you than ever, and you wouldn't have lost your sport."

"O, I'll make that all up," said hardy Phil. "I 'spose father thought he was doing right enough."

"Good-night, Phil."

"Good-night—mother."

Though she knew the boy loved her, her ears were seldom greeted by the word *mother* from his lips.

She went down stairs with a full heart. The old carpenter had gone; Mr. Winfield sat in a brown study.

"My dear," he said, as she entered, "that boy of ours is a very remarkable child—a remarkable child, upon my word. Strangely reticent—I am not sure but I shall have to discipline him for his secretiveness," he added, laughing.

Mrs. Winfield smiled, but she saw that his eyes were full of tears.

"You are a better judge of boys than I am, my dear, after all," he said a moment after. "Why really, there's something very noble about that little son of mine. I won't be so rash another time."

At the breakfast table on the following morning, Mr. Winfield asked Phil if he would like to go fishing.

The boy turned scarlet.

"Next time you fish out Jemmy," added his father, "I—I'll excuse you—for swimming." The strong man could hardly speak the words, his lips quivered so. Phil kept his eyes on his breakfast—the children stared, but at a sign from Mrs. Winfield, forbore to notice the boy. They knew soon enough, however, and for the second time in his life, Phil was nearly killed by kindness.